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That wild animal trainers never carry guns?

—That elephants have molars as big as a man's hand and that they can, and do, pull their own teeth?

—That Gargantua, the most vicious animal ever in captivity, was "his own worst enemy?"

You'll learn these and hundreds of other strange facts this "one-of-a-kind" book. Nobody else could tell story but Doc Henderson, the man who has the job keeping 700 animals well and happy.

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CIRCUS DOCTOR

BY J. Y. HENDERSON D.V.M.
CHIEF VETERINARIAN
OF THE RINGLING BROTHERS
AND BARNUM & BAILEY CIRCUS

As told to RICHARD TAPLINGER

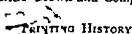


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Contents

CIRCUS DOCTOR

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trous boyhood dreams, waged fierce and total war inside my bra n

Circus l fe— — n a lot of ways The pay for th — was m — lions tig — quite a change for me!

My father was a small rancher in Kerrville, Texas about seventy five miles out of San Antonio I grew up in the midst of horses cattle, goats — two years old — too — trusted me with my own — three brothers handled animals well too but I was apparently the only one who inherited Papa s love for them all

When I had nothing else to do I would always be with o r animals—watching them grooming them, playing with them and, when old enough working them

Papa was particularly fond of horses and so was I He was a meticulous rider by the time I was ten he had tra ned me to be an able, good horseman He never toler ated careless and sloppy riding not because he wanted to make showmen out of his sons but because he had too much respect for the horses

Once, when Papa and I were riding the range, I got about a hundred yards ahead of him My legs were aching and tired—as they frequently were, because he insisted we ride erect with the legs tight, back relaxed but straight as a rod

"When you slouch in the saddle he would say "you a e off balance and you are hard on the horse Sit straight and spare your horse"

For a kid of ten this is tiring So once well out of my

To Sweetheart and Sonya, to Benny V and Ruth, to Champion and Rossia and Astral Princess, and to all my other friends and patients, this book is affectionately dedicated

If you pick up a starving dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you This is the principal difference between a dog and a man.

—Mark Twain

nave been teaching them their ways of "progressive education."

Goats are part of my earliest recollection. When I was about three and Papa didn't have his own ranch yet, we were living with Mother's folks; here he borrowed to invest in goats. Every cent he had went on those, when mohair was a valuable crop, but at first he couldn't even afford a shed to shelter them.

In Texas hills the temperature may be seventy degrees and within a few minutes drop to forty, so that every has to be particularly careful when he shears his lest they freeze to death if that cold or rainy spell comes up. When Papa had first shorn his animals and the wool, within two hours the wind shifted, the day turned b r blustery cold and rainy. All the adults in the family much set to carrying every piece of furniture of the house, and taking all the goats and herding them inside. There we all stayed for the night until it turned warm again—nobody there except us goats.

As I grew older one of my jobs was to ride the fence line. Goats are far from being the brightest animals in the world, and their favorite habit is to stick their heads through the wide mesh of a fence in an effort to graze on the other side. There was never the slightest bit of difference in the grass on either side of our fence, but to the goat as the human the distance always looks greener. Then of course the horns turned them and they were stuck, lest this be permanent, it was necessary to ride the fence or brutal o the animals would have simply starved to death in self-imposed pillories.

Besides this, goats are uncannily surefooted and have the remarkable knack of being able to jump down tremendous distances to land in very small areas without hurting themselves—and yet they don't, unfortunately, have the ability to jump back up again.

father's sight, I took my right leg out of the stirrup tossed it over the saddle horn in a relaxed position T Papa came galloping up and ordered me off my horse

"Now, son," he said, "lead the horse back home" T was a little matter of five miles, it made an adequate pression Never since then have I ridden a horse off l ance

As each child was born, Papa gave him a heifer, for very own and as soon as we were old enough we had take complete care of our cow My father supplied fe pasture, barn space and use of his bulls The cow remain our property and any heifers born remained the prope of the boy whose cow had bred Papa took all the b calves We never thought of the cattle as commerc enterprises, however, they were more like pets

Our little one-room village school, I now realize, w something which today in a big city would be called " *experiment in practical progressive education* " We didn know then about such things To us it was just school Bu some thirty six years ago, in this country one room schoo besides learning to read and write and where Dalla Chicago and London were located on a map we we trained to take care of our fathers' farms

We were taught about animals—not out of a textbook by the animals themselves Each child would be assigne one from his father's stock He would be told to go hom and take a sheep goat or cow, or whatever the famil could be persuaded to let him have to feed the anima and to give it every attention it needed At the end o each year, we had a sort of miniature county fair at the little school Each of us would bring in the animal we had cared for, and ribbons were awarded for those in the best condition

This didn t seem particularly startling or modern at the time but from what I have seen and read about b city schools I suspect that some of America's rural schools

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was by far the most interesting part of our work, although likely to haul us out of bed at all hours of the night and in all kinds of weather

Dr Young and I equally divided the hardships and easy jobs. We took turns at both the hospital work and the farm calls This kept us from getting bored It also enabled one of us to get rested up doing hospital duty after spending the previous night racing around on farm calls

About two months before North s call a terrible anthrax epidemic had broken out among all the animals on the surrounding farms This deadly disease, often fatal to animals and humans, strikes with the suddenness of lightning Animals die almost before they can be treated, humans catch it through direct contact with infected animals

When an epidemic broke out in those days it was almost impossible to do anything for the infected animals, the healthy must be vaccinated at once if they were to be saved Today penicillin is a successful combatant, but in 1941 this drug was only a rumor to us in the country

I had only studied about anthrax in school—epidemics, fortunately being rare But now in the surrounding farms thousands and thousands of animals of all kinds had to be vaccinated practically at once Dr Young and I, and also Dr Young s brother Pete who was associated with us, had worked twenty four hours a day When one of us got too exhausted to go on we would grab an hour's sleep when we could and where we could, then continue the effort to get at as many animals as possible

When the epidemic had first hit and we could only suspect it might be anthrax, I had performed a post mortem on the first anthrax-suspected cow to die As I pulled her spleen out it hit my left arm leaving a red showy splotch just where I had an open cut This insured my getting infected Despite the fact that I happen to be allergic to any horse serum I had to undergo inoculation

And so we boys would go out I, being the lighte[illegible] [illegible]uld be lowered down a cliff by a rope My job was [illegible] [illegible]t another rope around the goat, then my brothers wou[illegible] [illegible]ist both of us

So life went on till I was eighteen and wrote to Tex[illegible] [illegible]ricultural and Mechanical College for the veterinar[illegible] [illegible]hool prospectus—and was so intimidated by it that I a[illegible] [illegible]lly enrolled in the engineering course! But it didn[illegible] [illegible]ke me long to find my way back to animals and I c[illegible] [illegible]d college with a good practical knowledge of them [illegible] [illegible]ch was fortunate in another way too By the time [illegible] [illegible]ered, Depression had arrived and Papa's moderate pro[illegible] [illegible]ty disappeared around the corner with that of s[illegible] [illegible]ny other hard working citizens He had always boaste[illegible] [illegible] he could never go broke because he never had enoug[illegible] [illegible]o broke with, however these things are relative, an[illegible] the simple fact was there wasn't any money to pa[illegible] [illegible] tuition

[illegible]ut I had one thing to sell knowledge of horses I rod[illegible] [illegible] amateur, showing horses in the amateur class all over [illegible] state on week ends and training and riding horses for [illegible] college and at last I made enough to pay my way [illegible]ugh the veterinary school

When John Ringling North ma[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]ffer to travel [illegible] the circus I was in pract[illegible] [illegible] Dr [illegible] Young [illegible] Shreveport, Louisiana We h[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]ter [illegible]g and diversified practice [illegible] [illegible]ble setup Dr Young is one of th[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]ons in the country, so I was enjo[illegible] [illegible]rk [illegible] him

O[illegible]r practice was divided into two part[illegible]

We had a typical small animal hospital [illegible] we [illegible]k care of the dogs and the cats of the [illegible] [illegible] population and we had a large farm pract[illegible]

of the wild and semiwild animals the circus carried. As far as I had learned no one knew too much about them so besides the life the actual job was a mystery.

Well, I thought, another doctor might just take his chances on their living or dying if his limited knowledge couldn't help. But I like animals too much to make myself responsible for them without knowing I can give them really adequate care.

I decided to find out as much as I could about how wild animals are treated before making up my mind. There was one month in which to investigate.

Between visits to the library I made countless telephone calls to Dr J. K. Northway, chief veterinarian of the King Ranch, whom I knew of old.

At the end of that allotted month I had discovered two interesting facts.

Not very much indeed was known about treating sick wild animals mostly because no one had garnered any experience: wild beasts were usually restrained for treatment when injured but were seldom watched for disease they were subject to.

The second thing I learned from Dr. Northway was that the circus's biggest preoccupation was with its horses. Ringling Brothers had a fortune tied up in what was undoubtedly the most beautiful collection of horses in the world. They wanted everything possible done for the rest of their animals too but experience had taught them that they couldn't expect that to be too much.

At this time certain drugs like the sulfa group had just come on the market and there were other drugs like penicillin which were not then ready for use, but which we ...

ex

pe

against anthrax and I took to it so badly that for a while I thought I was going to die

The past two months I had spent trying to fight the effects of that anthrax inoculation yet growing more and more rundown from the resulting desultory appetite and debilitating insomnia By the time that September evening rolled around, I was probably at the lowest ebb of my life I was physically and nervously depleted and suffering from the moodiness and discouragement that only complete exhaustion can bring

Now, as I sat in my living room in the dark after that telephone call smoking cigarette after cigarette these episodes of my life wandered around in my mind I've always felt the future can only be built on what has gone before how did my sort of life lead to a circus?

Suddenly I remembered a story Mother liked to tell When I was ten and returning from my first circus I very proudly announced to the family I am going to be a veterinarian when I grow up and I am going to work for Ringling Brothers Circus

So here was my chance to fulfill a childhood dream How many of us ever have that opportunity?

Still I had doubts It had taken me many years to learn my preference for the company of animals to that of people But surely circus people would be mighty different from folks around Texas and Louisiana? I knew nothing about living conditions in the circus except that animals traveled in cattle cars The doctor probably traveled with them? Where would I sleep—in a tent or boxcar? What would I eat—badly prepared food or mostly sandwiches? It was an unknown world to me difficult to imagine

I could manage the horses all night but I knew absolutely nothing about the handling diseases or treatment

CHAPTER II Meet the Patients

A PARTICULARLY IGNOMINIOUS prize-ring defeat had recently immortalized the expression, "I should of stood in bed"

So now as my train sped eastward towards Sarasota, through calendar-like Southern landscapes, the wheels seemed to click along to nervous reiteration I should of stood in bed . I should of stood . . . in bed . . .

To the vision of seven hundred wild animals hungrily licking their chops I shudderingly got off at Sarasota

Bustling streets, colorful with palm trees and tropical shrubbery a DRIVE IT YOURSELF sign With a car soon [illegible]

[illegible]

the dentist

A huge billboard ahead . . .

RINGLING BROTHERS
BARNUM & BAILEY
The Greatest Show on Earth
(Turn left here)

Handsomely decorated with roaring lions, great mouths filled with long, sharp, hungry fangs . .

I turned left.

Almost immediately I came to the Main Gate

Just like that No preliminaries; no wasted time. Sick animals are waiting

As we walked outside of the electrical shop Mr North paused

"This is it he said proudly swinging his arm in a complete arc

Pointing straight ahead almost as far as one could see, he indicated a large, square, brick building That's our machine shop" he said "That is where we build and repair everything we use here or when we are on the road. We even build our own specially designed railroad cars . *everything but the axles and wheels*

'Wouldn't it be easier to use reconditioned standard boxcars and coaches? I naively asked

"And how would you fit a giraffe into a standard box car? he demanded

I scratched my head over that puzzler my first stupefying realization of the enormity and the complexity of the manifold problems that were daily fare to the whole circus organization I should doubtless have to digest some of my own but first I must learn what they were

Mr North's arm swung gradually to the right. Where he pointed off in the distance I saw a large arena, about the size of the big top It had a ring for horse and elephant acts and a large grass area for acrobats spectacles and miscellaneous performances On the far side of it was an old grandstand similar to the kind found in any neighborhood ball park

'That's where we give our Sunday shows for the tourists, and where all our acts do their rehearsing when we're here in winter quarters Mr North explained

Then he toured me through all the buildings scattered over the endless acres of the lot In the monkey house I met Gargantua and M'Toto lolling but still glowering fiercely in their air-conditioned cages The Duna and

We stopped in front of a huge black bear sluggishly lolling in a corner of the cage. I looked at him He looked at me

"Looks like you have a patient already Doc," North stated "Tim is rather mean" he warned—then fortunately added "I wouldn t examine him right now if I were you, but he s sick. Just on a quick look what do you think is wrong?"

This was the first time I'd been at closer range to a bear than perhaps, fifty yards At first glance he had seemed like any sleepy bear and I vaguely remembered hearing something about how bears hibernate Now I studied his eyes They seemed unusually yellow and as he opened his mouth I noticed more undue yellow around the gums

Under pressure from my new boss a strange thing now happened Suddenly the bear was no longer a bear He

[illegible]

l er complaint.

Notching my thumbs in my belt and settling back on my heels I turned to the boss and said "I think this bear has something seriously wrong with his liver

"Liver? He was obviously surprised

"That s what I think without examining him I said, "but I d like to look him over

[illegible]

f eshment stand, he hailed a dignified gentleman of medium build

"Here is someone you will want to know right away" he told me "Mr Court Doc Henderson Doc, here, is our new vet You ve probably heard of Alfred Court, Doc."

middle of the kraal, the enormous animals surrounding us and looming over us like redwood trees, it was impossible to avoid the implications of their pink, mean little eyes

I was relieved to see the lethal tusks had been removed—until a thought came whose job would it be to take out those of future elephants?

[illegible]

ness"

"If you ever need any help, just call on me, Doc"—McClain took up the cheerful refrain—"I know most of these animals pretty well and have a lot of good friends among them"

[illegible]

were making themselves available

"I might as well show you the trained cats while we are about it," North reminded himself "They chew each other up quite a bit and they will be probably your most frequent and certainly your most important patients."

He led me through the "cat barn" with its scientific indoor and outdoor cages We came to the outdoor cat training area There I was startled by the spectacle of a bare-chested bronze-skinned man standing in the affectionate embrace of a [illegible]
played with [illegible]
called her "S[illegible]
but highly e[illegible]
returned to [illegible]

Indeed I didn't have to listen to the rest of the [illegible] duction Mr Court is called the greatest trainer of [illegible] animals of all time

This was the biggest thrill I'd had in years Since I [illegible] a kid I'd known his name and had seen him do one of [illegible] most difficult acts that can be performed with wild anima[illegible] —the mixed group I have seen Court put throug[illegible] their paces lions leopards panthers tigers jaguars, pola[illegible] bears and great Danes in one cage at the same time [illegible] Exactly how difficult it is to train and control a cageful of natural enemies took me years of experience with the circus to learn But even on my first day there, I knew that it was the peak of daring and efficiency in wild animal training

I hope you won't let all these new animals scare you, Court said kindly

I'm not exactly scared I [illegible] but [illegible] I know he laughed [illegible] ing them ever [illegible] them Well don't [illegible] touch [illegible]

I'd like to think my care of them was for their own good [illegible] having to treat

I'll be glad [illegible] of [illegible] help [illegible] ne As far as the [illegible] you by telling you [illegible] Call o[illegible] each individual animal [illegible] help[illegible] ess We are pretty [illegible] but I know [illegible]

This amused [illegible] to [illegible] my busi[illegible]

I was to learn that friendship with wild animals was not

and can never be completely trusted

the wall of horses' heads to the middle of the main horse corral. On three sides of us there were open stalls, and on the fourth were box stalls where the most favored horses were kept In the immediate center of the corral were patches of grass decorated with palm trees and a large watering trough.

I felt that the entrance to the corral would justify plagiarism in an inscription Through these portals pass the most beautiful horses in the world

best of each breed Along the far end were the ponies In all, the show carried about two hundred horses—divided between this corral and the lower corral across from the cat barn—and all in A 1 condition

The horse doctoring was to present many problems, but here I was thoroughly at home. This I looked forward to with keen anticipation.

So there were my patients I remembered —

in size when re-seen after a long absence by the

[illegible]

those wild animals would also be doctored

The next morning North was on the job even before I checked in He called me into his office

"Doc," he said, "Tim the black bear died last night I didn t think he was as sick as all that or I would have used you"

"I am sorry to hear that, Mr North I really should have examined him yesterday Do you mind if I perform a post mortem?"

"I wish you would."

The animal was brought to my operating table where North stayed to watch I opened the bear and cut straight for the liver And there sure enough growing right on top of it, was a tremendous tumor

"Nice guess, Doc

I couldn t restrain a grin If a knowledge of dogs and cats and horses and pigs could really be transferred to their wild counterparts so easily then maybe I was going to be able to keep these seven hundred wild animals in pretty good physical condition.

Before the day was out, North invited me into one of the streamlined railroad cars took a key out of his pocket and opened the door

"This will be your stateroom on the road," he told me—and when my surprise must have showed "How did you think you were going to travel—cattle car?"

I laughed embarrassedly probably making it very obvious that that was exactly my thought

"We do have a cattle car for you he added, "in case

om early morning until late at night and frequently ight long, I was on the circus grounds This was not use of love of hard work or long hours—I hadn t been Th from Texas long enough for that I was plunged headlong into an overpowering job I wanted to learn about it very rapidly and I was learning that for me there was a lot to learn

For instance, once I pointed my finger—"What is that little animal there?

The menagerie superintendent looked over and laughed "A cinnamon bear—and they aren t so little That happens to be a baby"

I laughed too but until then I had thought vaguely that bears came in two varieties—bears and polar bears Our circus owned five different kinds

* * *

The show had just come into winter quarters for the next four months all would first rest then the performers would start practicing new tricks and in many cases new acts then for about a month the entire group together with new imports would be co-ordinated into a finished performance for the road

Although now there was no daily packing and unpacking and while having all the animals permanently housed for the period was an advantage, life was busy and sometimes hectic

The [illegible]

the [illegible]

pe [illegible]

weak with vomiting because of the ocean trip and nervous because of their new surroundings Animals I have found, are particularly sensitive to their neighbors Put one next to a different animal from the one he is used to and you are likely to have trouble I had known this to be true of

you have a very sick animal who needs sitting up with on the road "

He described to me what was to serve for years as a hospital car It was a car with just blank stalls in it—good-sized stalls, with equipment to keep animals from falling from train motion or illness—and sleeping quarters for me or one of my assistants at the far end

'That is for you when you want to use it or need to use it," North said, "otherwise, this stateroom is where you live'

It proved more than comfortable living Pullman travel even at its best could never be as homey as I was to find that circus setup

CHAPTER III Starting—with a Roar

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN the Florida climate it could have been the vigorous routine of life in the circus or perhaps the complete change of every detail of my way of living effected the cure Not being an animal I don t pretend to be able to diagnose for myself The fact remains that the next four months which comprised the busiest period of my life, kept me so occupied that I completely forgot about my illness due to the anthrax injection

into the flesh He was treading very lightly on that paw It was already badly infected

My f

I co

will

nen

he eats little

work just as ... out an anesthetic

We called a couple of boys from the adjoining animal houses over to help I made a lasso out of a long length of rope and after three or four tries managed to slip the noose over Arvid s neck one of his forepaws sticking through it (This was necessary because if neither paw had stuck through there was the danger of the noose tightening around his neck) To accomplish the trick we had to dangle the rope through the bars and tease Arvid with it, and the bear being a playful animal instinctively stuck his head and a paw through the loop in a somewhat teasing, somewhat exploratory manner Then we had him We tightened the noose, and then all four of us leaned on the rope, pulled him over and held him tightly against the bars of the cage We then put another rope around the injured paw and two more boys held that paw through the bars so that it couldn t move

While they held tight I went to work on Arvid

The operation itself was very simple a local anesthetic injected into the paw so that the bear wouldn t suffer any pain and amputation of the two broken toes Then I made an incision up higher, large enough to drain the infection, and doused the paw with a good strong antiseptic The cage boy was instructed to sprinkle sulfa on Arvid s paw as often as he could get near him and the business was over It wasn t anything to write to one s veterinary school surgery professor about but as my first operation on a wild animal it stays in my memory more vividly than any I have performed since And for years whenever I had

horses and here it was true of practically every other animal that I came to know

At 6 30 every morning I reported to the little building, my hospital Here I would familiarize myself with my medicines and equipment and add to the list of supplies needed not only for winter quarters but for the road And here, on my second day, came my first "action"

I was looking over the interior of the hospital, wondering how best to convert one corner into a research laboratory, when a voice outside shouted the call which—though I didn't know it at the time—was to become my trade mark

"Hey, Doc!'

Many years ago the cry 'Hey Rube!' brought circus hands running from all direction It meant "trouble" Its modern equivalent 'Hey Doc!' brings me running—frequently in all directions It too usually means trouble

I opened the door and yelled 'Hey?' It was John Sabo, the menagerie superintendent

'Doc, I've got a big black bear over there," he said "I thought since you were a little foggy about bears you might want to start learning Nothing very serious, but he has a broken claw and it s broken all the way up into the flesh I think it might be infected

I drew in my breath but said 'Sure John I'll be there in a minute" I put some instruments and antiseptics into my bag and started over This was it I felt a sort of stage fright, and that feeling stayed with me for a long, long time

Bears are both unfriendly and very untrustworthy Trainers and keepers have been mauled and killed by those that for years have acted like trained dogs Their claws are long and sharp, and they have enormous strength in their multipurpose arms

We examined the right forepaw of Arvid, the bear through the cage; it was evident that he had split it well up

jotted in my notebook Whenever a new bear joins [illegible] worms

Since there is no time for hesitation or research when an imal may be dying it was encouraging to me to find, ne and again, a point of reference in my former practice it helped with wild animals

As I was walking back to the hospital that day a question me—Was it a little foolish to walk into a bear's cage even ough pretty sure he was too sick and too weak to be ngerous? Evidently he had accepted my manner A terinarian very seldom considers his a dangerous profes on and yet even with domestic animals there is danger horse can kick a man's head off with one swift kick, and bull can be at least as dangerous as any animal known lowever, you simply learn the animal's characteristics and en you can calmly and intelligently protect yourself t would seem that the way to get along with wild animals the way you treat domestic animals fear none but espect all

Notes I made that day were useful but there are still nexpected mischances Sometimes a bear will show no ymptoms of worms until it is too late to help him and a andsome menagerie polar bear died thus quite recently despite all our precautions

He had refused food the previous day and this day as he swallowed his first bite of food he went into convul sions and was dead before I could get to his cage Because his manner of dying made me suspect strychnine poison ing I started to perform a post mortem on him in the cage When I cut him open I noticed that the intestine just below the stomach was as hard as wood As I plunged the knife into it, the wall burst and worms sprayed into the air like water from a fire hose.

stage fright over work on a bear, John Sabo would remind me I'd had my "Arvid education"

* * *

My next contact with the bear family happened just two days later, and that also made a lasting impression on me

A trainer had arrived in winter quarters from Germany with twelve trained polar bears He came running over to my hospital on this particular morning and I gathered from his screams that he was giving me the German equivalent of "Hey, Doc!' I followed him, wildly guessing at what equipment to take with me

In the cage one of his polar bears was in the midst of terrible convulsions It struck me—judging again by my dog experiences—that this looked very much like a case of worms It didn t seem too likely, because these trained animals are nursed like babies by their trainers and are watched twenty four hours a day by either the trainer or the cage boy Their diet, too, is carefully regulated Nevertheless, it did look like worms

We had the other bears run out of the cage quickly and the trainer and I gave the bear a shot of a sedative A test proved that my diagnosis was correct and I wormed him immediately In due time that one bear relieved himself of over half a gallon of long white worms

I figured that this must be a weakness of polar bears if it could happen to them under such close surveillance so next I gave the other bears the same treatment a dose of tetrachlorethylene to drug the worms followed an hour later by a strong purgative (Without the latter the bear might die of the worm poison or else the worms might come to, hungrier and peppier than ever) Every one of these bears yielded at least a half gallon of worms In all my subsequent experiences with sick bears, particularly polar bears, I always suspect worms first

I jotted in my notebook *Whenever a new bear joins the show introduce yourself to him with a test for worms He may need a good stiff worming*

The first of hundreds of routines had started

Since there is no time for hesitation or research when an animal may be dying it was encouraging to me to find, time and again a point of reference ... that helped ...

u ...

the ...

da ... Evidently he had accepted ... too weak to be veterinarian very seldom considers his a dangerous profession, and yet even with domestic animals there is danger a horse can kick a man s head off with one swift kick, and a bull can be at least as dangerous as any animal known However you simply learn the animal s characteristics and then you can calmly and intelligently protect yourself It would seem that the way to get along with wild animals is the way you treat domestic animals fear none but respect all

Notes I made that day were useful but there are still unexpected mischances Sometimes a bear will show no symptoms of worms until it is too late to help him and a handsome menagerie polar bear died thus quite recently despite all our precautions

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Apparently the worms, starved from the previous day had hit the upper intestine like a crowd of homeward bound New Yorkers raiding the BMT on a rainy night. Packed in just as tightly, they paralyzed the bear's intestines Bears, you see, are more vulnerable than subways.

The hospital needed straightening up, supplies needed ordering, I had to get acquainted with personnel and animals and all their various routines, and at the same time things kept happening One never knew what was coming next (That is a situation, I might say, that hasn't changed to this day A one-armed paperhanger is a slouch compared to a two armed circus veterinarian)

One noon during my first week I stopped at the horse corral for a routine check on two horses with colic, to make sure that the grooms were carrying out instructions (I never permit a horse with colic to be left alone, there is a chance of his lying down, and frequently he will toss around so that an intestine will loop around another, causing what is known as "twisted gut" When the gas hits the obstruction, the intestine ruptures After medicating

walk him, for hours if neces

ystem)

happened to glance out the window and saw that Alfred Court was bringing his animals into the big outdoor cage for rehearsal I hadn't had time yet to see that act so now I watched, while he brought his animals in, directed each one to a pedestal and then smoothly and apparently effortlessly put them through their very difficult paces

He was almost finished when he turned his back for a moment to get a piece of meat as a reward for a leopard As he did, a tiger sitting on a pedestal just left of a big male lion struck at the lion with his paw It might have been in play, or it might have been in anger; mixed groups present these mishaps

The tiger's paw grazed the lion

in an instan

As he did

the ground

his pedestal

Court took one look at the lion and immediately drove the other animals through the chute back into their cages He called me over

"Look at this, Doc, will you?" he said

I walked to the bars of the cage and looked in at the lion I nodded my head I saw what Court meant the jaw was definitely broken

"What do you think?' Court said

"I don t know," I answered 'Have you ever heard of

operation to mend

th

has

he

ready, th

of Neml

Similar operations had been performed on dogs, and I wondered whether the lion's nature would permit an exact imitation

A squeeze cage was being brought up against the door of the lion s cage A squeeze cage is small, strong and on wheels One end is a door

sides are fixed on

can gradually be cl . or opened out The object of the squeeze cage is to hold a wild animal immobile while he is being worked on, to keep him from hurting himself—or his doctor! The ends of the

squeeze cage have straight up-and-down bars The side have closer bars running in both directions in order to kee

squeeze cage If prodding doesn't work, a small piece o meat placed in the squeeze cage will do the trick The the door at the end of the squeeze cage is lowered and th handle wound until the animal is held, not tightly enoug to hurt him, but snugly enough so that he won't hurt any one else A good precaution is to rope the squeeze ca to the animal s cage before opening the doors

The first thing I had to do was anesthetize When th lion was safely in the squeeze cage I pricked a vein in hi front leg and kept injecting the fluid slowly until he looke drowsy and began going limp Then the needle was with drawn and he collapsed on the floor and from that poi on we were out of danger—he would sleep from six t eight hours I believed

We moved the cage over to the hospital buildin opened it up and slid the lion onto the operating table examined his jaw and found that the lower jawbone wa broken clean through in two places, leaving the enti center section hanging limp

When a dog has a broken jaw you wire the broke bones together; you then wire the lower jaw to the upp jaw, tightly, to keep his jaws clenched and completely im mobile Then till the bone knits you feed your dog b dripping milk slowly into the corner of his mouth whe the flesh is loose.

o the corner of his mouth We had to figure out an
ier way

By considering where we must vary the usual plan, I
ought of something that might work Drilling holes on
' side of the two breaks, through the lower jaw just
eath the gum line, and using stiff wire, I laced the cen-
. broken section of the jaw to the two outer sections,
is would hold the entire lower jawbone solid in one
ece to heal, but there was still the problem of keeping
e l on from moving this jaw and at the same time allow
g him to eat I took two blocks of wood each about two
ches thick. One block fitted between upper and lower
olars on each side, leaving room for his tongue between
iem More holes were bored to lace wires through the
wbones, top and bottom, his jaws being wired tightly
et separated by those blocks of wood

This meant that the entire lower jaw was solid in one
iece, and both upper and lower jaws were being held firm,
ut his mouth was permanently open because of those
locks of wood Because the center section had no wood,
e could get his tongue out to lap up milk The only
question that bothered me was whether for the six or eight
weeks it would take the jaw to set milk would give him
the nourishment he needed

After we had finished working I sewed him up and

[illegible]

[illegible] in his cage

The operation had taken three hours Court and I
looked at each other and it was hard to tell which of us
was more tired We had shared the nervous strain and,
since he assisted me throughout the operation, our physical
labor was equally divided as well My strain was due to the
fact that I wanted this operation to be a success His was
due to the fact that a trainer does become attached to his

squeeze cage have straight up-and-down bars The sides have closer bars running in both directions in order to keep the animal from getting his claws through By bringing this squeeze cage up to the door of the lion's cage and opening both doors it is usually an easy matter to prod him into the squeeze cage If prodding doesn't work, a small piece of meat placed in the squeeze cage will do the trick Then the door at the end of the squeeze cage is lowered and the handle wound until the animal is held, not tightly enough to hurt him, but snugly enough so that he won't hurt anyone else A good precaution is to rope the squeeze cage to the animal s cage before opening the doors

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[illegible] idea First of all, [illegible] two shifts to dri[illegible] uth Secondly (though numerical sequences may well be reversed), you would have a difficult time finding men who would be willing to stand alongside a sore lion dripping anything

There was understanding between us, and although in [illegible]

Just a few days after this operation on Court's lion, I was standing outside the cat barn having my first lengthy chat with Damoo Dhotre He was wearing a tan T shirt and [illegible]

[illegible] his animals I had observed how they did everything but now I wanted to know why they did it

While we were talking I noticed that the cage boys were running some of Damoo's cats from their cages in the cat barn into the chute which connects with the outdoor training ring There were leopards, panthers, black jaguars, pumas. As each animal was driven forward into the chute, a board was inserted partitioning him off in his own cell

I had noticed this out of the corner of my eye, and during a break in the conversation, I pointed and said to Damoo "How con [illegible]

Oh,' he said [illegible]
work" He snuffed [illegible]
me [illegible]

You will pardon me please? I must work for a while I will be free in a half hour and we can talk some more" Whereupon he walked the few yards to the cage, opened the door swung himself in, latched the door after him and then gave the signal to the cage boys to let the cats into the ring with him

My first wild animal interest was the big cats—and to this day I think it is the greatest That may be because they are the most terrifying Actually, I think my interest is a

animals, almost the way a parent does to his chil'

The next morning the lion was full of pep and when came up to his cage he was assiduously lapping up al milk the boys could put in his cage After the third day began pulverizing meat and putting it in the milk found that he was able to get most of this meat up his tongue and to swallow it without chewing He some weight, but he came through that operation fully and recovered completely

Six weeks later we anesthetized him again opened jaw up and removed the wire The jaw had knit perfect the bone was smooth and straight and hard, and we had completely healthy lion who went back into the ring and performed just as well as he ever had before He lived years after that, when he finally did die, not so very long ago, it was from old age

I had hoped that nothing of this sort would turn up quite so soon, but in looking back on it I think perhaps this operation, coming when it did, is the luckiest thing that happened to me during that period This was no routine treatment It was something for which there was little any precedent If it hadn t worked I don't know how would have felt The fact that it was successful gave m an amount of confidence that I needed badly at that time and which I am sure enabled me to save the lives of count less other animals during the ensuing months

Alfred Court and I were friends and saw a great deal of each other until he retired quite recently The friendship dated from this operation As we worked together, both to the same end, each of us realized—without either of us saying anything—that we were men who were happiest when we were working for and with animals We weren misanthropes our relationships with people were excellent and enjoyable but we were more at home with animals When there had been a choice in our lives, each of us had always made the decision that kept us close to animals

ats The male can usually be identified by the tremendous mane on the back of his head and around his neck The on is a little less fierce than people imagine He is a noisy animal, and noisy animals like noisy people are . . . ll
hend's The Lion mel . . .
yat. He can be tau
young He is a n ce a . . . ound

Trainers, however have been attacked by lions they have even been killed by them While I was working on this book, Mae Kovar whom I knew well when she was an animal trainer for Ringling Brothers, was killed by a lion in California When a lion attacks he will never spring in one leap and land on you the way some of the other cats will He is more likely to come in rushes, or he will knock you down with his paw His claws are long and sharp His paw is heavy and can easily break a man s back or his neck before the animal pounces on him The lion is most dangerous when males and females are in the ring together

It was Damoo who pointed out to me that of all the jungle cats, the lion is the only one that travels in prides or groups The tigers, the leopards, the panthers, all travel either singly or in pairs That makes an important difference In the jungle, when a lioness in the pride comes in heat all the males will fight over her They will fight until one emerges the victor He may have left a train of dead, maimed, or simply wounded animals behind That victorious male and the female go off together many, many miles away in almost complete hiding, and there they have what amounts to a honeymoon They stay away two or three weeks Most of that time they neither hunt nor eat, and should any unfortunate animal or man come in their manner he is quickly disposed of

That same jungle instinct doesn t leave a lion because he happens to be driven onto a ship and quartered in a circus many thousands of miles away from home. Wild animals, we have to be reminded, are never tame they can be

combination of admiration for their beauty and dig and the challenge they present to any man, be he trai doctor, or cage boy Visitors to winter quarters by thousands stand in front of the cages of these animals a almost invariably call them by the wrong name A m will stand in front of a leopard cage and say to his w 'Come over here, Mary, and look at these tigers'

It seemed odd to me that this should be so until I membered that except in our largest cities there are zoos and the vast majority of our population never has t chance to see wild animals That accounted, I suppos for the tremendous popularity of the circus menage when the show went on the road This was the only z many people ever saw, and a considerable zoo it was

As a result of my friendship with Court and Dhotre a my increasing fondness for the cats, I now began to le *more about them than I had ever known before* I talk to the cat men I read animal books

The commonly found cats in our zoos and circuses a the *lions*, *tigers*, *leopards*, *black panthers*, *jaguars*, bla jaguars, and then some of the smaller ones such as ocelo cougars, wildcats The differences are rather striking

The lion, *of course*, has long been *known as* the King Beasts I asked Damoo once whether he felt the title jus fied

"Yes' he said, 'in my opinion it is First of all, he loo the part He looks like a king He has size he has dignit he has what appears to be great pride Secondly, eve though some of the smaller animals can attack faster tha he can the long hair around his neck usually prevents h getting killed by them I think, Damoo concluded, 'th if there is a king of the jungle, the lion certainly earns th title'

The lion is *one* of the few animals that nearly everybod recognizes It *comes* from Africa It is the largest of th

ts The male can usually be identified by the tremendous mane on the back of his head and around his neck. The lion is a little less fierce than people imagine He is a noisy animal, and noisy animals like noisy people are usually friendly The lion makes friends easily He is highly intelligent. He can be taught tricks rather easily if he is caught young He is a nice animal to have around

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That same jungle instinct doesn't leave a lion because he happens to be driven onto a ship and quartered in a circus many thousands of miles away from home. Wild animals, we have to be reminded are never tame; they can be

trained with patience to do certain tricks but they a still wild in every respect

In the ring when a female lion comes into heat tl males as a rule don t fight only because the trainer h them under control They have been punished in the pa for fighting in the ring and remembering that punishmen they stay on their pedestals But they do growl at ea other and every instinct urges them to fight They are e tremely nervous At this time they are very unpleasant is at this point that any slight change from the usual voice or movement—anything at all unfamiliar that th trainer does—is likely another animal make peated it is likely to c point he will attack either the other animal or perhap the trainer himself For that reason many trainers wi remove the female from the act during the time she is i heat

A very good friend of mine Dick Clemens was attacke twice in one recent season by a lion at the time a femal in the cage was in heat Once a lion knocked him dov and mauled him The other time he bit him through th shoulder At that point the relationship became so straine that Clemens had to take this lion out of his act Yet i this case the lion was a bottle fed pet of Clemens s he ha been carefully raised and trained by Dick from the tim the animal was a cub Nevertheless when jungle instinc comes to the fore even domestic born lions are blinded to things like loyalty and friendship He reminded everybod that he was a jungle animal

Lion acts are sensational because the animals are large because they do look fierce and because a trainer who ca train a lion to feign attack can make himself look like very great hero indeed

Tigers are the ones with stripes They are considered by many trainers the most vicious and the least reliable of

. Both animals are extremely vicious They are quick; y have mean tempers; but they also have a high degree ntelligence and can be trained to do a number of amaz- tricks

Damoo tells that when he started learning about animal ining, at the age of thirteen, his first trick was to ride iger around the ring His teacher told him, "If you can n to get along with tigers, nothing will keep you from ing a great animal man"

The tiger is the largest of the cats next to the lion, fre- ently measuring twelve to thirteen feet from nose to tail, d weighing up to four hundred and fifty pounds. In tion, the tiger probably looks fiercer than any of the her cats

The leopard is a comparatively small, spotted animal.

ten hide on the limb of a tree and leap on any passing rey Many naturalists contend that he is the best-camou- aged animal in the jungle.

ne has two leopards who permit him to carry them round his neck like fur pieces even though they weigh in he neighborhood of one hundred and fifty pounds

The black panther is actually a freak leopard Like hu- mans, some animals are melanistic—that is, born with an xcess of black pigment, a condition opposite to albinoism, or lack of pigment. A spotted leopard may have a litter

containing one or more black leopards likewise breeding two black leopards may produce either black or spotted or both

This is the animal normally called the "panther" (though various countries often refer to some local animal as a panther) If you ever look at this sort of panther closely you will find that although his coat seems to be solid black, he actually contains the same spotting as a leopard in a black of even darker intensity than the rest of the coat He is a freak, and perhaps because he is poorly camouflaged for the jungle the black panther is even quicker than the leopard and is commonly considered the most dangerous animal to work with He is almost impossible to make friends with, and sometimes doesn't pa

its, when the

playful—just

on the other

hand, develops into a snarling mass of fury within a few weeks after he is born He seems to know that things are going to be tough for one whose color deviates, and literally *comes out fighting* He gets worse and worse throughout his life, and can be controlled only through sheer will power and patience on the part of the trainer He always remains a sullen and somewhat reluctant pupil

The spotted jaguar looks like a leopard but is native to the Western Hemisphere from Texas to Paraguay He is slightly larger and more heavily built than the Asiatic or African leopard, and his face is larger and more triangular His head and neck have a similarity to a bull's rather than a cat's The jaguar is *normally not too bright, although* he can be trained, and he has the same kind of meanness that a leopard has It is seldom that one finds trainers going out of their way to work with him

The black jaguar has the same relation to the spotted jaguar as the panther does to the spotted leopard It is a freak It is poorly camouflaged and it is a vicious violent

animal. A trainer very seldom works with black jaguars because it isn't apparent to the audience that he is performing one of the most difficult jobs in wild animal training, and seems therefore not worth while. Damoo Dhotre, however, has a pair of black jaguars—for many years, I believe, the only trained ones in this country. He has taught them to do a number of difficult tricks including that of allowing themselves to be carried around his neck. Considering that Negus, the male, once used to attack Damoo every time they were in the ring together, this is something of a feat. But the average onlooker won't consider it as exciting as seeing Damoo with a leopard around his neck. What the onlooker doesn't know is that this is something personal.

Negus is the only animal of some hundreds that he has worked with that continued creating trouble for Damoo over a long period of time. Purely as a personal matter, Damoo determined that he was going to subdue and carry this animal on his shoulders before another [illegible] Dangerous? Indescribably [illegible] ...en't built of this ...ness of training

These were the [illegible] ...ious types of cats we had when I joined the show. Training any of them takes courage, skill, and patience, and a very long apprenticeship. Pouring a mixed assortment of them into one cage at one time takes even more and is the most admired feat of all.

All wild animal trainers will admit that once an animal is completely out of control there is nothing a trainer can do. Although there is a common belief that in a pinch the trainer can pull out his revolver and shoot the animal dead, this is certainly never done in the Ringling Brothers circus and I doubt that it is resorted to elsewhere.

During my introduction to circus life and animal training I was surprised to learn that there wasn't a gun carried by anyone connected with the organization—unless per

haps in the pay wagon The explanation seems logic enough As Alfred Court said to me once What woul you do with a gun? With an audience completely su rounding you if you missed the animal you would un doubtedly hit one or more spectators and he adde your chances of missing the animal would be excellen Remember his attack is sudden He is coming at you H is moving He is in the middle of a leap He is diving O you have come to the point of realizing that a stick can hold him off he is almost on you You fire at a quickl moving target The chances of hitting him with one sho out of one try are almost negligible Even if you are luck enough to do that you probably won t save yourself be cause he continues his leap which he has started He prob ably won t die instantaneously because your aim can t be that good on a moving target and so you still get hurt or killed

Their safety depends on their ability to keep the ani mals under control or to defend themselves in other ways against any animal out of control

I spent many hours during those first few months lean ing on a fence outside the cat barn talking to Alfred and Damoo I believe I like cats partly because of my fondne s for these two men but I think it worked the other way too because I was fond of cats I instinctively liked these men and was fascinated by their profession

Both of them seemed in many ways rather paradoxical Alfred Court not only had the iron nerve and the physical dominance that all animal trainers must have but he was also a very courteous almost Old World courtly person His name might almost have been tailored for him

Damoo although short of stature, often impresses his audiences as a giant He too has an air of physical dom nance including a sort of daredevil quality But Damoo is also something of an intellectual He is steeped in a back

ound of Hindu philosophy and Hindu mysticism Al ough his life has not included more than five months of mal education, he is one of the most learned men I have er met. His knowledge of animals is thoroughly practical, t since he has a keen interest in the animals he works

ne of the most enlightening experiences in the world

Like Tarzan, for whom he once doubled in a movie, Damoo was raised with wild animals He was born in India nd at the age of thirteen had already spent three years in is uncle's circus Those years were spent as an acrobat, clown, and trick bicycle rider but at thirteen he began raining lions, as a student animal trainer By the time he was seventeen he was well known throughout India as a daredevil bicycle acrobat and an equally daredevil animal trainer

He has had many narrow escapes He has on many occa

many times," he says "and every time it was my own fault"

Most trainers agree that the chief fault among trainers and the chief reason for their being hurt is that they become overconfident and are inclined to forget that their animals are still jungle creatures The trainer who remembers this is always on his guard The trainer who doesn't eventually gets hurt or killed

When I would see Damoo or Alfred casually walking into the ring with their animals, practicing their acts fighting off unruly animals, and coming out again to have a

frankfurter between rehearsals, I would ask them wheth they ever worried about getting hurt someday It seem impossible that they did, and at the same time it seeme unlikely that they wouldn't What I learned was that parently with all wild animal trainers there is usually n fear as the rest of us know it Dimoo has told me ma times that he is thoroughly aware of danger, that he kno just what each animal is likely to do to him, but this 'fear as he calls it, is apparently a mental process, not an em tional one On the other hand, I have seen animal traine who on certain days seemed really frightened.

I, myself, on the many occasions when I have gone int a cage with a wild animal, have usually been frightene Through my own experiences and through talking to wi animal trainers I have evolved a theory that is at odds w that of the medical profession

I had always heard that animals could "smell fear", th if a human were really afraid of an animal, the anim would know it no matter what the person did to cover i up I think this is wrong I think I can provide eviden to make a case for the fact that animals cannot smell fea that fear is not something tangible I think animals ca sense fear, but I think they get it through the tone of a pe son's voice and from his actions I myself have handle horses, mean horses, of whom I was terrified, but by keep ing my voice stern and my actions definite, I was able t keep that fact from the animals Some of these horses, know, would have kicked me into a corner if they ha been able to smell my uncertainty And I have gone in cages with bears and leopards who would have attacke me instinctively if they had felt I was bluffing my confic

One day as I was walking over to the outdoor ring to watch Damoo rehearse his act, I noticed a cluster of people around one of the cages. I ran over to the cage. Damoo, who spends all his free hours walking up and down in front of the cages making friends with his animals and keeping an eye on them, had discovered a break in the tail of Lima, one of his pumas.

Together we looked at the tail. Yes, definitely broken.

(We never discovered how this happened. It might have been clawed by a neighbor although there were no claw marks. Sometimes when an animal is being shuttled from one cage to another the cage boy swings the iron gate closed behind the animal too quickly while transferring him. A cat, as soon as he is through a gate, often swings around and starts through in the other direction. For this reason the boys learn to work very rapidly closing the gates, and it may have been that Lima got her tail caught and broken that way.)

She didn't seem to be in pain. We decided that together we would run her into the squeeze cage and Damoo could go ahead and work the rest of the animals while I operated. I had never mended a puma's tail before, but of course I had had similar operations on domestic animals.

I had a couple of the cage boys hold her forepaws out through the bars of the squeeze cage and I gave her an injection of Nembutal. When she was asleep I opened the back end of the squeeze cage—I didn't bother to remove her because this operation didn't take very long—and set the tail, binding it tightly with a plaster cast which I hoped she wouldn't chew up too soon.

I watched her very carefully for the next few days. Although at first the cast bothered her and she did chew at it a little, she left enough on for protection, the tail stayed in place and the mere fact that there was an annoyance there tended to make Lima conscious enough of the tail to avoid swinging it around or getting it caught in places

that might have injured it When we removed the
her tail was perfectly straight Damoo put her right
into the act and she was an entirely healthy and pre
able animal

I stumbled across some amazing facts during those
few weeks that big cats have sinus trouble for insta
Alfred Court had suspected this for a long time, and
whenever an animal of his appeared sluggish he would
me over and we would examine it Everything I found
firmed his suspicion On certain days, certain of the
would hang their heads low, indicating headache
would be either ill tempered or completely spiritless,
pending on the individual animal

I found that letting an animal rest for a couple of
would usually help him recover and frequently, m
aspirin in his food would speed the process—30 grains
lion, 15 grains to a leopard, 60 grains to a horse. (
grains is the adult human dose)

I knew that horses frequently suffer from sinus tro
when a cold is neglected and the animal is worked
hard What apparently happens is that the cold in his
ik p
you

oubl
both horses and dogs In these cases, as with hum
aspirin relieves the pain There have been a few horse
which I have actually had to operate to drain the infect
but these cases are rare and I do it only when absolu
necessary

I had bought a rather large and as I recall an expen
black leather bound notebook, and here it was I b
writing down jottings of new information observat
theories and just plain facts This I hoped would be us
on the road when things were rushed and we were work

on a tight schedule when I didn t have time to sit and chat with trainers and cage boys and menagerie men before making decisions

CHAPTER IV Elephants Have Tender Skins

SOMETIMES one recalls vividly certain experiences without being able to understand the importance of their details or why memory retains them

When I was about five a neighbor took me for a ride in his new and in those days revolutionary automobile I asked for something during the ride—ice cream I think—and he said very positively Nosiree! I don t know why I have gone on remembering that so clearly but every time I saw that neighbor after that, although he was fond of me and went out of his way to do little favors I wanted to run

Likewise, I will always remember the day I discovered that elephants have tender skins but this memory I do understand—and for a very good reason The story starts a bit, just before I joined the show toward the end of the tour that year there was a tragedy in Atlanta Atlanta was on the swingback toward winter quarters and the show was to play there in October Just at the time John Ringling North was telephoning me

to offer me the job, the circus train was pulling into the Atlanta siding and preparing to unload

Suddenly one after another, the elephants dropped on the ground By the time the boys were ready to walk them to the lot most of the animals were out cold

The newspapers made a good deal of it at the time because there was something of a mystery attached to it Obviously, the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey elephant herd had been poisoned

A number of the animals died very quickly The others were saved, although some of them were violently sick for a while Nobody could imagine who would dislike elephants enough to feed them poison What made the mystery even deeper was the fact that the elephant herd is never unguarded It is guarded partly to keep people from teasing or hurting the animals and partly to keep the animals under control If one elephant should ever break loose and go on a rampage the tendency is for the others to do so

In this particular case the elephants had been watched very carefully and yet had been poisoned The surviving elephants were treated on the spot Post mortems were performed on the dead elephants and it was determined by laboratory tests that arsenic had killed them

The mystery was finally solved when it was found that not too far from the railroad siding at the previous stop there had been a chemical factory Among the waste materials which it scattered—it supposed harmlessly—over the surrounding territory was arsenic When, quite innocently the elephants' hay had been scattered over this arsenic covered ground some of the animals had taken enough to kill them Those that didn t die still took enough to get sick

The veterinarian who treated the elephants gave a medicine intravenously in the ear In several cases, some of the

medicine got out of the vein into the tender tissue of the ear and abscessed

By the time I joined the circus, we had some thirty elephants with abscesses behind their ears Walter McClain broke the news to me The elephants had had these abscesses for some weeks before I got there, but they weren't too serious McClain knew that as soon as a veterinarian was hired he could take care of them He was also smart enough not to confront me with a problem like that dur-

himself We chatted idly for thirty minutes or so and then he asked, "Doc, you know much about elephants?"

"No, I don't know anything about elephants"

"Doc, we've got some sick elephants"

"That's just fine," I said "What's wrong with them?"

"Well," he said, "you remember reading about the poisoning in Atlanta A lot of them are still suffering from the aftereffects"

"Well, I'll see what can be done about it," I said. "Do they let you treat them?"

"Yes," he said slowly "I think maybe the two of us might be able to manage On the whole they are fairly calm while you are treating them—that is, of course, if you are stronger th

untrustworthy; highly intelligent, yes—probably the most intelligent of all wild animals except chimps But also mean, unpredictable. They have been known to at

tack, for no apparent reason Despite my qualms, they h to be worked on, however, and I was only thankful an i telligent elephant man like Walter McClain was around help I got some of my equipment together and we start walking over to the elephant kraal

"I'll tell you one thing about these elephant abscesses Walter said "Just draining won't be enough I guess yo would call them incapsulated abscesses, because what hap pens is that a capsule seems to have formed between th cartilage and the skin Instead of just digging a hole an draining, you'll have to cut and actually remove the who capsule"

"Well," I said, "let me open one up and I'll soon fi out"

The elephant kraal is really a row of open sheds form into a square with a watering trough in the center As yo enter, you find four solid rows of elephants staring at yo from around the sides Each is chained to a ring embedd in concrete by one hind and one front leg There is a loo chain strung across in front of each row of animals to kee people from getting too close to them In the circus, this known as the "picket line"

The elephant who was in particular pain this day wa named Jenny She was restless She was moving her hea in circles and stamping her feet Walter and I approach her cautiously, and Walter grabbed the elephant hook

This is a stick about the length of a broom handle O the end of it is a small, dull hook This hook is used by a elephant men in leading and training elephants It doesn hurt the animal, but it tugs at her in one direction or a other and she soon learns to respect orders given by mea of the hook

Walter got in front of Jenny, holding her trunk up an her head down I could just about reach the area in bac of the ear where it was necessary to operate As soon as

ched her, Jenny started bobbing her head and weaving pute the hook

'Why is she bouncing so much?" I asked Walter anxi k "I am not hurting her I am just patting her ear"

"Touching them can drive them nearly *crazy*," Walter d "Didn't you know, Doc, that elephants have very nder skins?"

"Are you kidding?" I scoffed, slapping my hand sharply Jenny's gray hide to disprove Walter's joke To my nazement Jenny never flinched She even seemed to im.

"That's what I mean, Doc,' Walter laughed "They love firm slap, but a fly or a tickle on their skin will drive 'em crazy"

I was being crowded by the elephant next to Jenny be-use the elephants on the picket line are chained rather ose to each other I took out my syringe and, after opping the area with antiseptic, injected a local anes ietic just to be sure An anesthetic isn't very good for this nd of thing usually, because an animal can fight the in ection as much as the operation and an infected part like ius isn't too responsive because of the fact that the infec-

Suddenly, without my knowing it the elephant next in line—for what reason I will never know—dropped her trunk on the ...

a clip

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and as my weight made it go taut, it sprung me back a. I landed flat on my back underneath Jenny

I lay sprawled on the ground, half stunned more sea than I have ever been in my life, when Jenny's bladd overflowed Then I moved so fast that it might be d scribed as bouncing

Only one thin-
and there, and th
the hook and he
forth and laugh
mediately and I managed to pull myself together pat up my dampened dignity, and, in a much calmer frame t mind, continue the operation

I have had hundreds of such operations since but I hav never liked them—not one As a general rule, the absce becomes as big as a man s hand and I have to make a correspondingly big opening through which to work Th abscess must be packed with silver nitrate to loo en th capsule, and then worked around and around by hand un the entire capsule is loosened and can be taken out through the opening It is seldom painful to the elephant but they make a terrible fuss simply because they do not like to be handled

Elephants I fear could never be influenced by the 'soft feminine touch

An elephant will invariably toss hay and dirt or what ever he can get his trunk around onto his back It is sel dom you see an elephant without this layer of dirt and hay on his back The hay and dirt is insulation against the pricks and tickles of flies and mosquitoes an elephant's worst enemies This surprised me because I had always thought as [illegible] ost peo le do, that an elephant a thick skir [illegible] ks that way I have learned tl [illegible] ses also have ten der skins [illegible] them is to wa up and [illegible] thing t

ember when considering walking up to pat a hippo)
An elephant s normal temperature is ninty nine to a
ndred degrees but the temperature of the veterinarian
ring it always shoots sky high when he is trying to get
eading on an elephant The thermometer is about four
ches long but it is breakable, and it can be lost—I always
a string to the one I am using so I can recover it And
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When we do find an elephant with a high temperature
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The first time one of Walter McClain s elephants got an
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any other animal to get a tube into the stomach you
t it through the nose Well It next became a mat
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Only one thing saved me from giving up the circus then and there, and that was [illegible] opped the hook and he was do[illegible] forth and laughing fit t[illegible] mediately and I managed to pull myself toge[illegible] up my dampened dignity, and, in a much calmer frame of mind, continue the operation

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mber when considering walking up to pat a hippo) An elephant's normal temperature is ninety nine to a [illegible]

[illegible]

e a string to the one I am using so I can recover it. And whenever the performance of temperature taking is neces ry, I always like to have the elephant trainer handy When the trainer is around, the animal has a combination of both fear and confidence He has a fear of doing something he is not supposed to do, and the confidence that no harm will come to him Sometimes the trainer, himself, will take the elephant s temperature More often he will stand at the animal s head and talk to her and just generally keep her calm while I try to get the reading

When we do find an elephant with a high temperature and other symptoms of stomach upset, we have our work unpleasantly cut out for us A horse can be fed a laxative or any other medicine by means of a capsule There s no trick at all to making a horse swallow such a capsule. This is not true of an elephant. An elephant s mouth can t be held open His teeth are hard and strong and you can t take a chance on putting your hand in his mouth if you are making him do something he doesn t want to do He won t swallow anything he doesn t want to swallow, and his tongue is so powerful that nothing can get past it if the elephant doesn t approve All in all, he is a difficult patient

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[illegible] stomach, I decided simply to feed her a laxative through a [illegible]

[illegible] trying to get her to swill down the laxative

(The normal laxative dose for an elephant is one gallon of raw linseed oil)

The elephant was Eva It took about five gallons before we got one gallon into Eva's stomach She would stick her trunk in her mouth, draw out the medicine we had managed to pour in and squirt it all over Walter and me We sloshed around ankle deep in laxative, and decided sadly that as a general routine this was not going to work A new system was called for

I next tried a medicine called Lentin, and this later became my standard elephant procedure Lentin is a laxative that can be given by injection It is extremely strong and has to be administered with great care It immediately starts secretion of all the glands in the body and it works in about ten minutes If there is a danger that the animal may have an obstruction in his intestine, Lentin can kill him

Elephants come down with chills frequently, exactly the way horses do It is easy to medicate a horse with brandy using a dose syringe but an elephant is almost impossible to treat with a dose syringe A dose syringe is long enough to reach way back into an animals mouth, by holding the animal s head back and unloading the syringe you can make him swallow Not an elephant When they have chills and won t take brandy I give them an injection of camphorated oil and guaiacol or some similar preparation

The elephants have always been a sort of veterinarian's nuisance factor, because they seldom get anything very serious but they are continually ailing with one little thing or another For instance, very often a tusk will break and the root will have to be extracted (what I do then is to cut back three or four inches and pick out the broken pieces of tusk)

All of our elephants are females because we have found

hat the males tend to be troublemakers Since elephants can't breed very well in captivity, there is no advantage in having males

We make it a practice to remove a large portion of the tusk as soon as we get an elephant, so if she should start to make trouble, she will be a good deal less dangerous th[illegible] she would be if she st[illegible]

first days qualms t[illegible]

tusk is a fantastic [illegible]

coaxes her down on her knees and I take her tusks off about four inches from her cheeks with a hack saw There is no sensitivity and the elephants don t seem to mind the carpentering in the least!

When Walter McClain was alive—he met a tragic death shortly after I joined the circus—he and I used to talk frequently about breeding elephants It has proved to be virtually impossible, at least in this country There have been reports from Germany and Italy that elephants have been bred in captivity and the offspring have lived As far as I can check this has not happened in this country There have been a negligible number of cases of elephants having been bred but none where the offspring have lived over thirty days I think the reason for this is that the elephants must be left alone and must be kept very calm and unexcited before they will breed

I would like, someday to buy a good male elephant, pick three or four of our better females and put them off four or five miles from the circus grounds in a large [illegible] age pen by themselves [illegible] men with them to take [illegible] se from coming nea[illegible] [illegible] by people, by sounds, by automobiles—left alone in the wilderness, as it were—I think they might stand a pretty good chance of producing healthy offspring If so it would be a famous "first" in this country and I think the publicity value to the circus would be immense

Elephant men are among the busiest of animal men, because their charges are probably the only ones in captivity that need manicuring Elephants have all kinds of trouble with their feet Their pads get sore, they become infected, they have the same kind of cuticle trouble human beings do, only worse An elephant man's spare time is usually spent working on cuticles, paring toe nails, polishing, rubbing with antiseptic, and, if the elephant act is going to be extremely fancy that year, actually applying fingernail polish

Our elephants have to walk on concrete going to and from the lots We have found that it is rather hard on their feet To avoid serious trouble, we examine each elephant's feet every day We look for cracks, breaks, and slight infections, and treatment begins at once before the animal becomes lame This is good for the animal and we have found that the time spent is decidedly worth our while

Sometimes our elephant charges turn up with new, unknown diseases I had a phone call recently from an animal man in St Louis He had a trained elephant act and one of the elephants had developed a rather prominent swelling under the belly over an area of perhaps two and a half or three feet He had asked a couple of local veterinarians but they were pretty much in the dark because there is nothing in horses that corresponds to it I had run across a minor case only once in the circus but I told him to apply hot towels, to keep the animal s belly cased in hot packs, held on with a sling and to keep constantly wetting them I also suggested that he give her streptomycin daily for five days As far as I could guess, it was a toxic condition caused by an infection somewhere in the elephant s system and it was collecting under the skin at the lowest portion of the animal's body I doubted very much if it was an infection of that immediate area, or that it was

serious infection anywhere else. The trainer treated the animal as I suggested and checked with me by phone every day. Within two weeks his elephant was all right and the ailment never recurred.

Particularly as they grow older, elephants are likely to suffer from paralyzed trunk. A sort of creeping paralysis comes over this vital part, and although the animal can move it the trunk does not have its usual flexibility nor does it have its normal strength. An elephant with paralyzed trunk can feed himself pretty well, but instead of being able to trunk up and drop his food into his mouth, he has to toss his head and catch his meal in mid air.

The minor ailments can usually be put into the hands of the elephant boys, as for instance when their skins get dry and have to be oiled. Once the proper oil has been given to the boy, he can rub it in as well or better than I, because he is there all the time and the animal knows him.

Elephants bite each other's tails, partly out of nervousness and partly because that's the way elephants are. The tails get infected at the bitten part and they have to be treated continually with hot packs and sulfa and other [illegible] a hurt [illegible] afe, and [illegible] a good, [illegible]

I got over most of my fear of el[illegible]

[illegible] personality, apparently, she calmed the patient while I treated her. I became, in time, quite attached to Ruth, and she is still my chief assistant in my elephant work

I'll always remember how I learned about elephants from Jenny, but animal men agree that elephants on the ly when the night that they and the a little while

CHAPTER V We Don't Shoot Them Any More

I LIKE HORSES I know they are excitable and have to be watched carefully and I will admit they aren't as smart as some of the other animals They get injured easily and don't take care of themselves too well But I like them

It may be that my accumulation of knowledge about them does things for my ego I don't know what the reason is It doesn't make any difference When I am working with horses no matter how hard the work or how long the hours, I am contented

I like horses I know how they act and why I think I know what goes on in their heads I know how to tell a horse what I am thinking and I know how to figure out what he is thinking I have taught horses practically everything you can teach a horse, and I have learned a lot from them too

A horse can be the most beautiful animal in the world

if he is healthy and well-cared for He can be a good companion for the long pull, or a means of escape in a crisis Horses can save you or ruin you, hurt you or protect you They surpass all other animals in their ability to respond to human attention I like them

During my first weeks in Sarasota I was lonesome—lonesome for my horse, a mare named Benny V She was a colt when I last saw her in Kerrville, the fifth generation of a line owned by my father ever since his marriage The first animal he owned was Benny V's great, great, great-grandmother I couldn't have her with me in Shreveport, but here in Sarasota we had all the space in creation It was a heaven for horses There was no reason why Benny V and I couldn't be together

She arrived one Saturday morning She looked wonderful. I spent all that morning scrubbing and grooming her and then left her in the lower corral with orders that she be turned loose in the pasture for several hours a day My plan was to leave her here while I was on the road, hoping she would be in good shape for breeding the following year I didn't breed her now because I wanted to be around when she foaled It looked very much as though I were soon to be raising a family and it was a pretty happy feeling Horses can do that to a man

On one of my daily inspections of the horses my attention was taken by a big black stallion named Lindy who had a swelling just above his stifle. He was one of the best saddle horses I have ever known His lameness bothered me a great deal

Lindy didn't seem to limp very much and the groom had told me he thought the infection was draining But for some reason I didn't like the look of it It had hung on far too long

For two or three days, I tried draining the infection, but somehow or other it never seemed to get any better It was

very hard to examine because, althought Lindy was a gentle horse normally and never caused any trouble, the minute I went near his bad leg he would strike out in all directions with what seemed like all four feet at once

On this day, as on most others, I had more things to do than there was time for I was always being forced to put off a lot of routine work for some emergency By the afternoon, everything seemed to be under control and there was nothing pressing for attention, so I gave Lindy a local anesthetic much against his will and opened up the infection I took out a piece of stick about two-and-a half inches long and about three quarters of an inch in diameter It had apparently run up at an angle in his leg above the knee No one saw it happen and there had been only the smallest wound I don't know how long it had been there, but it was easy to see why the infection hadn't cleared

About a week later, I was a little puzzled to find that this same infection was still draining It was just as though nothing had been done to it This time I was seriously worried, so I immediately went for my equipment I got three of the better grooms to help me, we laid the horse down and I injected a shot of anesthetic that put him completely to sleep I had decided to open the leg I went into the wound the way I had before, but this time I continued cutting This time, I found that the area continued clear on through to the other side of the leg Before I finished, I pulled out another piece of stick some six inches long Apparently Lindy had rubbed against something or had fallen, this splinter went almost directly upward in one side of the leg and almost out the other side

After this, I kept his leg packed for a few days and it healed beautifully There was not the slightest suggestion of a limp and this pleased me, because for a performing horse it isn't enough to make him well From an economic standpoint, you must make him well enough to perform,

it wouldn't pay to have a horse on which thousands of dollars have been spent for training and be able to use him only for hauling a float He must go back into his act.

Some of the things that happen to our horses in the process of the amazing tricks they do are rather spectacular; some of the treatments and cures are equally so But whether the treatment is spectacular or not, the horses, because of their great number and their great value, are a continual source of trouble.

The way my new routine was working out, I was spending about half my time with the horses Coming out to winter quarters early, I would first make my rounds of the horse corral Then I would examine any animal that I knew was sick or injured or any animal that had required working on in the last day or two

Then I would go through the menagerie, the elephant corral, the outdoor menagerie cages the monkey house, the lower corral, and end up with the cat barn

Also I was called continually all day and frequently at night to examine animals that weren t acting right Most of the time these didn t require much actual attention the cage boys the trainers helpers, and the grooms all had strict orders to call me if they had the slightest suspicion that an animal was off-color, and they did their work well, but that meant they called me many times when an animal had some slight discomfort that didn t require treating—something that possibly could simply be slept off It was better that way but it was hectic and time-consuming

Furthermore, I was still spending a lot of time talking to people talking to the cage boys, talking to the performers I was trying to learn as much about the circus as such as I possibly could, so that I wouldn t be bothered with the little matters of timing and routine when we went on the road and, therefore, could devote all my energy to the animals

My hospital was coming along fine The managemer ordered anything I wanted in the way of medicine an equipment I had had new shelves put in, and now too pride in my small and unpretentious but efficient littl setup

So much of my time was spent with the horses becaus it was a sure bet that once they started traveling ther would be illnesses, accidents, fights and other mishaps wanted to become so well acquainted with each individua horse that there would be no chance of anything progres ing when I could nip it in the bud I had to operate on th theory of the old time family physician who perhaps knev more about his patients than he did about medicine rather than the newer type of doctor who knows mor about medicine than he does about his patients

One morning, shortly after a very early breakfast, Jerry a beautiful, big white bareback horse, was brought into th indoor training ring for rehearsal Jerry was the Numbe One horse in a horse to-horse trick The two horses can tered around the ring, one immediately behind the other While they ran, an acrobat standing on Jerry's back, woul jump into the air do a backward somersault and land o the back of the Number Two horse This was a rathe spectacular act and a very difficult one to do Jerry was a good horse and he had been doing this routine for a num ber of years

[illegible] was a loud commotion ir [illegible] past the door Tiny, a tl [illegible] me running out calling [illegible]

I ran in to find Jerry down on the ground He had stepped on the ring curb and broken his leg All bareback horses are trained to follow the ring curb around I have seldom known one to step on it One quick look at him and I found that the break was right above the hoof

Leaving him where he was I ran for my emergency kit,

hen several assistants and I went to work on him to set the bone Down where the break was, there was very little flesh and I could set it by touch I prepared some plaster of Paris and made a cast. We walked Jerry back on three legs to his stall, where he immediately lay down

Jerry was a wonderful patient and that is what saved his life For the next eight weeks he spent twenty three-and half hours of every twenty four lying down in his stall He even ate lying down When he did stand up, he did it very carefully and he held the injured leg off the ground When he did lie down he did it as carefully as though he were settling down on a bed of eggs. The bottom of the bandaged leg never even got dirty!

He came through it all beautifully We cut down on his feed so his lying around wouldn't make him fat and sluggish or colicky, or give him any of the diseases that horses get from eating too much and not exercising enough Within six months, Jerry was perfectly healthy and walked without a limp He was never good for bareback work again, though, because he had turned ring-shy He was always afraid he was going to hit that ring curb, and he was unsure enough of himself to be unreliable in the ring But we did use him for a number of other purposes for a long time after that, and he was always a good horse.

Jerry was replaced in the act by Tom, who had been all trained but even before we got on the road, Tom proved unsatisfactory During rehearsal one day he hit out with both hind feet for no apparent reason and kicked the head of the Number Two horse There wasn't much I could do about the injured horse except to ease his pain a little and take care of the flesh wound His head healed with a very obvious dent in it For show purposes, we managed to cover it up with a tassel or flower, but that horse became ring-shy in another way He would no longer run behind any other horse So we trained him as the

Number One horse to replace Tom, and a new Numbe Two horse had to be broken in to work with him.

Frequently, when a horse is sick he gets what is know as azoturia. In the old days, we used to call that "Monday morning sickness." It comes of a horse lying around all da Sunday, eating as much as he does when working. Startin to work on Mon

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forced to move; he stands a good chance of rupturing muscle or some internal organ.

When azoturia does come on, although we make ever attempt to keep it down by cutting the feed when th animals aren't working, I always give them an injection c something to relax them, and then a calcium gluconat injection to restore their strength. They are usually a right within a couple of h

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ting his entire leg in a metal splint. The splint, which D Young built out of aluminum, was so made that it fitte him up around his hip and extended down a couple c inches below his hoof We bored a hole through his hoo and bolted that to the splint It was like a permaner crutch, and that Shetland could actually walk while th break was healing because his weight was on his bod rather than on his leg. That is now a common treatmen for fractures for a number of four legged animals. Not s long ago, these same animals would have been shot.

I was learning new things even about horses during thes first four months in winter quarters. Things were happen ing so fast, I often didn't dare wait until somebody callec

[illegible] My seven

[illegible]

ril, which was opening day in New York, rehearsals were easing in frequency and intensity and there was an easing number of the little accidents that always happen when animals get together

What I learned about horses was the result of having so any horses doing so many different things in one place, at e time. I developed routine treatments for every foreseeable contingency because only with a well worked-out otre would it be possible to handle all of the animals the road

Take the routine of anesthetizing a horse, for example I ever give him Nembutal because it makes horses toss round a good deal while they are coming out of it It is rribly dangerous for a horse to thrash around He can urt himself too easily A chloral hydrate anesthesia is aniz h preferable I don t always anesthetize completely, ut even a small amount of chloral hydrate takes the fight ut of them and removes practically all the pain While doing a thorough internal operation, I simply use a large dose of chloral hydrate

During this period it was necessary to castrate a number of horses I have never liked to castrate horses without good reason but there are times when a male is mean and too hard to handle unless he is castrated Our experience has been that geldings, or castrated males, make by far the best performers in the ring Studs, although sometrres good are likely to be too excitable and unreliable They are the biters and kickers Mares are good except when they are in heat then they, too become extremely wild and are likely to bite and kick. But a well-trained gelding, in the long run is the best performing horse. Whether

Number One horse to replace Tom, and a new Number Two horse had to be broken in to work with him

Frequently, when a horse is sick he gets what is known as azoturia In the old days, we used to call that "Monday morning sickness" It comes of a horse lying around all day Sunday, eating as much as he does when working Starting [illegible]

[illegible] bling The danger comes if he tries too hard or if he is forced to move, he stands a good chance of rupturing a muscle or some internal organ.

When azoturia does come on, although we make every attempt to keep it down by cutting the feed when the animals aren't working, I always give them an injection of something to relax them, and then a calcium gluconate injection to restore their strength. They are usually all right within a couple of hours

I haven't had many bone breaks, luckily. Although most of them can now be treated, the constant traveling makes for complications

There was a white Shetland I treated in Shreveport This pony broke his leg rather high up, which required putting his entire leg in a metal splint The splint, which Dr. Young built out of aluminum, was so made that it fitted him up around his hip and extended down a couple of inches below his hoof We bored a hole through his hoof and bolted that to the splint It was like a permanent crutch, and that Shetland could actually walk while the break was healing because his weight was on his body rather than on his leg That is now a common treatment for fractures for a number of four legged animals Not so long ago, these same animals would have been shot

[illegible]

Awaiting a crisis was only inviting a crisis My seven ...sed animals all needed attention every day Out of ... hundred animals, just in the ordinary course of ...s, it wasn t hard to figure the incidence of sickness ...ccidents As we drew closer and closer to the first of ..., which was opening day in New York, rehearsals were ...ng in frequency and intensity and there was an ...asing number of the little accidents that always hap-... when animals get together

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the circus learned this from the Western cowboys I don't know But I do know that cowboys will almost never ride a mare, although for different reasons They almost always, to my knowledge, ride geldings

Arthur Konyot, who was training the Liberty Act, came over to see me one day and complained of a horse, a very bright horse and a very good performer, but a very mean animal I examined him and found something that one finds only occasionally in horses he had only one testicle. It was up in his abdomen and had never dropped It had to be brought down by means of what is known as a ridgeling operation

I anesthetized him completely, tied him up, and cut a hole in the region of the groin I got my hand in through the hole and poked around inside until I found the testicle and, with an instrument, removed it

This horse was all right within a very few weeks and every trace of stubbornness left him I made the groom walk him three or four miles a day while he was recovering for I have found that this continued forced exercising of a horse while he is recovering from an operation is probably the best post-operative treatment you can give him (From my reading lately, I gather that medical doctors are finding that very much the same thing holds true for human patients)

There are also some of our horses whom one might call neurotic There is never a year that I don't have one or two that are veritable babies about the slightest illness The smallest touch of colic will make them thrash around and kick and roll in their stalls unless somebody gives them a little attention Then they will calm down and happily take their medicine But the minute they are left alone, they start thrashing around again

This thrashing around is so dangerous, especially if a horse is colicky that I used to do almost anything to avoid

it. And then one day, I found a treatment that has worked beautifully ever since. The medicine I give horses for colic is a very sharp burning mixture It is usually fed to them in a capsule so that they don t taste it One day, while treating one of these hypochondriacs I took a little of this medicine out of the capsule, put it in a dose syringe, and dropped it in his mouth He tossed his head He poked his tongue out trying to get rid of it but he couldn t It burned him and he didn t like it That gave him something to think about By the time he had forgotten about that, he had also forgotten about his illness He slept quietly for the rest of the day

Some of our gentlest horses are among our worst patients We have a little bay hackney named Sally a beautiful horse. She usually never causes any trouble and never fights with the other horses But the minute anyone tries to give her any kind of medicine in the mouth she rears up and paws with her front feet She could easily kill a careless attendant

Our horses are temperamental because they perform They are always keyed up tense, and very nervous when they are being saddled to go into the act and they are always very calm right after it This is partly due to their training, and partly because trainers have found that high strung and high spirited horses make much better performers than full listless too gentle horses

There are horses that can t bear to be separated from their mates This is a characteristic that many people, particularly those with little experience, attribute only to monkeys My experience with monkeys has been otherwise his characteristic in fact isn t particularly true of any other animal, but I know there are horse couples that can t stand being separated

That first year we had two American saddle horses that didn t get on well together They used to fight all the time Nevertheless if one was taken out and saddled obviously

to go to work, it didn't affect the other But if it was ta out for any other reason, such as to go to the blacksm shop or for some other unaccustomed purpose the ot would neigh and whinny and break out into a sweat a thrash around until it, too, had to be taken away

After watching this for a while, I gave orders that wh ever one horse had to be taken anywhere, they both shou go together After that, we had no more trouble

We had two beautiful white Liberty horses, Ackm and Alle They were mates, but we noticed no particu attachment, though we knew that they never fought an had been stablemates for a long time One night, Ackma died of a twisted intestine Alle carried on in a way th I have never seen any other animal do She whinnied co tinually She refused to eat and she refused to sleep W doctored her, we tried her with new mates, we tried change of scene, we tempted her with every possible food we did everything in the way of medication and psycholog to increase her appetite but she simply wasted away With in two months she died of what can only be described as a broken heart

There are pests too, of course We are seldom troubled with the dreaded botfly—which, throughout the South and Southwest, is the bane of a farmer s existence It lays its eggs on the short hair around the horse s knee and under the chin The horse is annoyed by the itching and licks the eggs off The larvae, in turn hatch in his stomach and at tach themselves to the stomach wall To avoid this we watch for evidence of botfly eggs on horses' legs, and sim ply mop them off with kerosene The circus has one groom to every three horses, which gives a chance for the kind of care that almost no farmer can afford

Every time a new horse arrives, he is wormed immedi ately I don't worm our horses every year because it hasn't

necessary But I do see that every horse is wormed at once in three years

rongylus equinus—a little roundworm that sucks an ul's blood—worries farmers, and we watch carefully rgns of it to treat

'e also have a number of cases of quarter-crack among horses This means the hoof starts to crack up top, at fleshy part. A wound develops there, an infection sets and the hoof crack would, if it weren't stopped, con ie all the way down the hoof till the horse was perma-tly lame. We watch for this because it is common and oon as we see any sign, we take the horse over to our ksmith shop and have his shoes specially made to stop ailment and allow healing

Sometimes a horse has to be put away Sometimes he is l and sick. Sometimes he is badly wounded Sometimes has an incurable break or an incurable disease When ngs like this happen, we don't worry about the techni aties We destroy the animal, and we know, and every dy else knows, that this is a "mercy killing,' that there

horses, I usually inject the animal with strychnine. ere is no feeling until the strychnine hits the heart, then e animal dies instantaneously We bury him in a big ld we keep as our animal cemetery at the far end of our nter quarters

There is an ailment among horses called founder or lami

e the foot My usual experience has been that under either responds to treatment immediately, or it n't be treated successfully at all and the horse is in so uch pain he has to be destroyed In this disease, the sole

of the foot drops down below the wall of the hoof a causes excruciating pain

I had two cases of founder during my first weeks wi the show One was a bareback horse The cure was so com plete and so rapid that he was back in the act within week The other was a high school horse A high scho [illegible] om th [illegible] lancin [illegible] knee bowing, waving a flag, or walking up and shaking han with the band leader There is, of course, perfect directio from the rider Horses like this take two to three years c continual expert training in order to be good performer

The trainers, themselves, usually take a lifetime of trai ing In almost every case I can think of, they have com from families of high school riders and high school trai ers Probably the most famous example in recent yea is the great Konyot who was with the circus when I joine it and remained for several years after that It was on of his horses that came down with founder, and it seemed impossible that any cure could be complete enough t allow him to go back into the act Because such horse have to maneuver almost the way a human being does they have to be able to do things that one has no right to expect even a well horse to do.

However, I would try

I injected about a pint of normal saline solution into this horse's vein every three or four days I also gave him normal horse serum every day, dosed him with alum nitrate every four hours and kept his front feet wrapped in cold compresses As soon as he showed improvement I stopped the alum nitrate but continued the other treatment In a few weeks he was back in the act without a trace of limp

When we were ready to go on tour, it was a safe bet that these horse troubles were just beginning, but this phase

of m work worried me the least. There is always a great deal of satisfaction to be earned by caring for horses, and in my case they helped develop the self-confidence I ... for work in other animal departments To put a new ... on a famous remark I like horses I am glad I like them. Because if I did not like them, I wouldn t be around them, and I like being around them.

CHAPTER VI Training the Big Cats

TRAINING WILD ANIMALS has nothing at all to do with my ... with veterinary medicine in general and I have no de... to become a trainer I have never trained a wild animal ... perform, although I have raised two of them However ... did develop a very real interest in this profession or art, ... my first weeks with the circus, because of the tre... difficulties of the job and because of my friend ... with the trainers who worked with the show I learned a good deal about the big cats from Alfred ... and even more from Damoo Dhotre. Damoo s ... approach to animal training is unusual Having a ... curious as well as a very alert mind he has studied ... animals both as species and as individuals Damoo ... the most of what ... know about training cats

A trainer's job takes a combination of physical agili mental alertness, and courage It is naturally dangerou The trainers who live long are those who remember th a wild animal is never, never tamed, but only train Damoo has told me time and time again that whene a trainer gets hurt, it is always the trainer's fault—and th is not the boasting of a smug man who has happened t be lucky Damoo has been badly hurt and he has been i danger of death What he means is that it is bad to b come overconfident, to forget that the animals are sti wild, still savage, and always on the borderline of gettin completely out of control

Damoo's theory on training a wild animal is similar h says, to that of training a child "The first step," he say "is to remove the animal s fear An animal is instinctivel afraid of a stranger, and because he is afraid, he wil attack"

Damoo spends countless hours in front of a cage con … the cage He talks to … with his voice H … n the tip of a long pole Eventually, sometimes after weeks, the animal stops flying into a panic when Damoo approaches

When he has an animal at that point, he takes him into the training cage, making sure that there are ropes around the animal and that those ropes are held taut by boys outside the cage Then he plays with him, meanwhile doing everything possible to inspire the animal s confidence he assures the animal that he is not going to be hurt, he talks to him, he feeds him, and eventually he returns him to his cage

When the animal has become thoroughly friendly Damoo starts teaching him simple tricks With the aid of the boys holding the ropes, Damoo gives him the signal for his sitting on the pedestal He shows him what is expected of him and rewards him with a piece of meat

n he obeys After several sessions with the guide rope
. the meat, the animal begins to recognize Damoo's
al and, every time he hears it, he goes toward the

This is, perhaps, an oversimplification of the wild animal

her he will push or prod him and let him know where

whip
opular
ener, seldom are animals beaten by a trainer. It stands
o reason, if a trainer wants an animal to lose his fear, he
s hardly likely to beat him up every time he comes in

child is beaten into submission at every point, he will ... no respect but he will have fear and a grudge He ... wait for the chance to turn on his parents and if he ... turn on them, he will turn on someone else. He, too, ... headed for gangsterdom In animals, too," he says, "there must be both fear and respect He is punished only for doing wrong and he must know *why* he is being punished each time. He must be rewarded for being good and he ...

instant"

Damoo himself, though he has been attacked again and again, only severely hits an animal when there is a real fight and real danger, when the choice is between hitting the animal and being hurt

Damoo goes into the cage with five spotted leopards, two pumas, two black jaguars, and two black panthers One of the panthers still attacks him at the slightest provocation I have seen Damoo time and again avoid the animal's claw by less than an inch

I watched Damoo train Negus—the 170-pound black jaguar who once almost killed him—to be carried around ...

trick, climbing up to the top of a pyramid with ... animals By roping him and feeding him, Damoo finally got him to the point where he would stand on the two stools, his forelegs on one and his hind legs on the other When the jaguar did this Damoo would reward him with a piece of meat held out on the pointed end of a stick After several days of feeding him in this manner, the trainer would pat him on the back to get him used to his touch Then he went one step further he put his arm

round Negus' back and exerted pressure on his belly with the palm of his hand This was to get Negus used to that pressure he would feel when Damoo put his neck under Negus belly to lift him.

During the first few days of this, Negus was frightened He would lash out at Damoo and then run for his own pedestal. But by slow and patient work, Damoo got to the point where he could get one arm under the animal's belly and lift him two or three inches off the stools. By the end of the month Negus would lie quietly, draped around Damoo's neck.

It is not my purpose to make heroes of these trainers by pointing up the melodrama which is inherent in their profession, but too often in the public mind the amount of patience and study and understanding that goes into training wild animals is underestimated. Another common belief is that the animals have an organ removed, certain teeth pulled, or other mysterious operations performed to make them gentle. This is utter nonsense Other people think that the animals behave because the trainer whips the tar out of them If the people who make these accusations would stop to think for one moment, they would realize that if the whip were used to slash the animal, his fur and his skin would hardly be as smooth and unblemished as it invariably is. Every crack of the whip is a cue in the act. One unaccustomed move, and a trainer can be in serious trouble from the feeling of insecurity this might bring to his animals.

Some years ago Damoo trained a black panther to attack him as part of the act. At a certain signal the animal would attack Damoo and, as Damoo would step backward from her, the panther would leap and slash out at him with her claws. Time and again, I have seen the panther snatch the necklace from around Damoo's neck, so close to him did this cat come Menaka (pronounced "Men-yak-a"), the panther was a very quick animal Yet Damoo could be

successful with this kind of trick because he himse even quicker and has perfect physical control He s how always managed to keep an inch or two Menaka's reach

When Damoo went into the army, another trainer over the act The new trainer was a very competent, b intelligent woman The first time she preformed this with the panther everything went well until the poi which she wanted the animal to stop leaping and go to her pedestal Damoo had accomplished this by stop in his tracks and thrusting his head out at Menaka woman trainer was not entirely familiar with Me and wasn t quite sure of her Instead of stopping abso ly still probably afraid that the animal might try anc leap, she took still another step back But this was ex the wrong thing to do Menaka knew this as the cu jump and she mauled her badly

In a mixed group all the natural jungle enemies ar pected not only to sit quietly as neighbors, but actual come in close contact with each other during many of tricks A mixed group trainer has to be good but eve is sometimes attacked so complete absence of fear on part of these trainers is something that never fails to ar me

For myself I can t claim to be thoroughly unconce when working on a wild animal On the occasions wh was necessary to work on an animal that was not strained and not unconscious I have had a strange ing in the pit of my stomach and the symptoms of w might be water on the knee But the trainers dare no afraid In rare cases when the trainer has had reason become so he usually has found it expedient to change profession

Damoo is thoroughly aware of all the dangers but at same time he has the kind of confidence in himself t makes him feel master of whatever emergency arises

Court had the same confidence. He lived to retire. r trainers who have been in the business for many s expect to reach a ripe old age Many are sure that, if don't, it will be because of a little bug rather than a animal.

Damoo has a beautiful spotted leopard named Sonya [illegible]

ge.

I asked Damoo once whether, despite the fact that he [illegible]

rvous or excited, and he knows that he cannot trust r

"How, then," I asked him, "do you protect yourself when you do this trick?

"If you will watch me carefully," said Damoo, "you will see that some days, on the days when Sonya is upset, I will hold my chin down [illegible]

her

If that makes your blood run cold or bring duck bumps to your skin you were not born to be an animal trainer That is the stuff of which successful cat trainers are made I don't believe what they have can be developed We are born that way, or we are not

Cat training is such a fascinating art I never miss a chance to watch one of the trainers working his animals,

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same time he has the kind of confidence in himself that
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whether it is running through an old act or breaking th for new tricks Since some of the best trainers in the wo have worked and do work with the show, I have had chance to study them all at close range

There are two kinds of animal men There is a wor of difference between them, although the public usual is unaware of any distinction The first group are the r trainers They take raw animals out of the jungle, bre them, teach them tricks, and perform with them The are the men like Court, Dhotre, Proske, Clemens, Mathie and a few others Then there are the men who perfor with animals already broken and trained They simply r peat a given set of signals in order to make the anima perform One of the most famous of all American "trai ers" belonged to this group He even went so far as t employ a man to train his animals for him The Hager beck Zoo in Germany has for many years trained entire act and then sold them to "trainers" who were actually mer performers

It is an interesting fact that most cat trainers prefer to work with jungle raised animals rather than with bottle-fed animals The reason they give is that pet bottle fed animals are pampered when they are babies and are seldom pun ished By the time they get big enough to be dangerous, it is too late to start punishing them They are so completely unafraid that even hitting them lightly, which is enough to bring a young wild animal under control, will only make them savage and bring on an attack Trainers feel if they, themselves, raised an animal on a bottle, they would be sure to start disciplining it early so the animal would respect them and would respect their orders at a later date But if the animal had been raised as is a pet, by the time it was six or eight months old it would be much more dangerous than a jungle raised animal, be- cause it would have no fear and would only become bitter if then punished for the first time

There are many legends current about the experiences of nal trainers. One popular story which has been at uted to any number of trainers is about the man who once attacked by one of his animals, one of the other nals then saving his life I have asked a number of ners about this unlikely story and have found none of

e act. Before he got around to replacing him, the lion e night struck out at Damoo, ripped his arm badly, and, Damoo stepped back, lunged at him He knocked amoo down, and then, Damoo says, another of his lions hich happened to be directly behind him leaped over s fallen body and landed on the attacking lion The o lions started fighting This gave Damoo a chance to ring both animals under control However, he says ere is no evidence that the

to the detriment of the trainer, where the other animals became excited by the attacking one and all at tacked the trainer When this happens, the show has only one choice and that is to find a replacement for the

The cat trainers no doubt get a certain satisfaction out of their difficult achievement But as for me—the training ring is a nice place to visit but I d hate to make a living in it

whether it is running through an old act or breaking them for new tricks Since some of the best trainers in the world have worked and do work with the show, I have had a chance to study them all at close range

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n experience of this kind in school was not ...
icrease my anth...
e
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'c

p ...nts, and bears ... to come up with lions,

Back in my circus initiation period, we had an old lion named Samba. He was past his performing days and was l...ing out his years in the menagerie Never having done ...y dentistry on a wild animal, I somehow had the con...ident feeling that perhaps, if I lived a very good life, I would never have to But Samba didn't know about my confidence and he wasn t a judge of how lives were lived He was just an old lion having a lot of trouble eating

The keeper called me over one day, to ask me to watch the way this lion fed Samba would tear off a piece of meat savagely, and then chew, and chew, and chew He seemed never to finish one bite of meat I watched him for a while and then realized that apparently the meat was sticking back in his molars It couldn't possibly stick there unless those teeth were in very bad shape There was only one thing to do check those teeth

We ran Samba into a squeeze cage and gave him a small injection of Nembutal (For a short operation like this, there was no point in keeping him asleep for eight or ten or twelve hours) I gave him just enough Nembutal until he went down and his jaws were relaxed For the next couple of hours he could do me no harm This was all the time I needed to fix him up

The menagerie superintendent helped me put him on the operating table to examine him Two of his lower molars were very badly rotted They were broken and so decayed they had almost caverns in them Extracting a lion's tooth isn't too much different from extracting a human tooth The gum is broken away from the tooth, the tooth is loosened then extracted The only difficulty

CHAPTER VII This Won't Hurt Much

MY PASSIONATE DISLIKE of dentistry started in veterinary school One day an old Negro farmer brought a horse over to us and offered him for sale for one dollar Some of the horses that these poor farmers bring in at the end of the season are old, some are very old It had been many years since this horse had been very old Only once since then have I seen anything so decrepit, and that was a horse that a farmer in Ohio tried to sell me as the circus was passing through

Old as this horse was, the school bought him and the students embarked on a campaign to return him to health if not to youth I volunteered to take over at his dentistry because extraction is very easy in an old horse and I thought I would be getting away with something I was

He had two bad teeth in the back of his mouth I removed my shirt and went to work with real enthusiasm, certain that I remembered all my lessons in dentistry This was an easy job The boys who were assigned to the rest of his anatomy were really going to have tough going

Though I established some kind of school record for extracting two teeth in a minimum length of time, for the rest of my years in vet school, it was impossible to live down the fact that one of the teeth I pulled happened to be the wrong one

Like most kids, I hated going to the dentist—maybe more than most kids, because I had to go more often than most A dislike for dentists to start with, [illegible] d by

I w h enamel, such as ours As a result, tooth decay e't nonexistent in horses

ses do have other tooth troub'es Blind tooth is not nmon Th s is a case of two alternate teeth growing se together that the middle tooth has no room to down When it doesn't it simply grows backwards root pushes its way upward until it causes serious

e standard method for treating blind tooth is not

: and bit, until you reach the root of the offending 1. Then, with a little dental punch, you simply knock tooth back into the mouth, and then pack the wound has always been interesting to me to note an animal's 'n to pain Take the horse—this wound I have de-

I it is nearly healed, I change the packing and irrigate You would expect that the tissues would be sensitive, t to some extent. Yet I can't recall a single case of re seeming to mind in the least this daily changing gating, and even probing to determine the condition of wound.

Extract ng a horse's tooth becomes easier as the horse ws o'der As a horse ages, his teeth become longer, and they do, the root becomes shorter Horses frequently re loose teeth These are extremely easy to extract They cas nally spl t their teeth, but this, too, causes no uble except to the horse

is that the root of a lion's tooth extends into the gum for about an inch and a half and it is ticklish to make sure th entire tooth comes out without breaking off and leavin a splinter of root to cause future infection

ome care This wa
it to be right
look at h

Once Samba awoke, I wouldn't mouth to check its condition each day While working, explained each step to the menagerie superintendent wh it seemed, had never witnessed any but the most rout work on any of his animals and was fascinated by this p cedure He asked questions continuously and I found th my answers helped clarify my own thinking, as wel his We took the teeth out and packed the gums few minutes we changed the packing Meanwhile, it a good chance to study the rest of Samba's mouth this was all pretty new to me, too

We both must have lost track of the time That is only way I can explain it For, while I was pointing something in the lion's mouth, his jaws, which had hanging loose under the anesthetic, suddenly snap We both reacted instar we slid him back ater, Samba was s also dripping wet

When Samba woke up, he was on a cheap drunk w is the normal result of taking Nembutal as an anesth We put him back into his cage, and after stagg around for a while he lay down and went into a n sleep When he awoke he was not only eating norm but was much healthier and active than he had bee months

Considering the trouble they give otherwise, horses not too prone to tooth trouble Their teeth almost n decay I have a rather obvious theory that it is becau horse's tooth is a very solid bone f

ng as when a doctor, in all innocence, gently touches

phants' tusks cause continual trouble. We have found
nable to saw off tusks, because elephants do fight;
hen an elephant fights, she would be quite capable
ping an opponent to shreds with those sharp tusks
ven though the tusk has been cut off, frequently an
ant will break what remains. The problem then is to
a local anesthesia, then pick out as many fragments
e tusk as can be found in order to prevent infection

...llustrate the average length of the root of the
is about fifteen inches The wall of the tusk at the
end is nearly as thin as an eggshell

e had a Russian bear in an act. One day the trainer
his wife stopped me on the path to the hospital to ask
to take a look at the bear He was eating poorly, they
me, and there were signs of wildness in what wa
rwise a very gentle animal (The "gentle" was their
mine Gentleness is something bears are not noted for
ligence, maybe But not kindness)

e walked into the cage The trainer and his wife
ed right in purposefully, and I couldn't do anythin
follow without making an issue of it The train
the bear's head and his wife held the animal's mou
n. Then they looked at me and both assured me
ld work unmolested and safely

 was almost like a clown routine I was more than
le doubtful Although I have no particular ambition

watch how he eats and also how he digests his food If both functions are normal, the chances are that the horses teeth are all right

Once a year, I examine all the horses for rough teeth [illegible] is that their upper molars [illegible] utside and their lower molars on the inside These jagged points are painful as the horse chews his food. The treatment here is very simple I simply prop his mouth open with an instrument made for the purpose and "float" his teeth The float is an instrument which looks like a wood rasp, the operation is simply a matter of filing the teeth down until their points are dull

I have seen dogs with beautiful inlays and very care fully designed fillings My own hunch is that this is done largely for show, or perhaps for practice Never in my ex perience has it been necessary to fill a dog's tooth H teeth are either healthy or they are split or broken and have to be extracted

Although elephants have teeth, they seldom caus trouble An elephant has enormous molars Each tooth is big as the palm of a man's hand I had to pull one once ut the tooth was very loose Since my knees were precisel n the same condition, it was lucky that some carefu igging with a long handled pair of extractors lifted th ooth effortlessly I should not relish the job of pulling ght molar, but thanks to elephant ingenuity and intell ence, I very likely may be spared an elephant, when sh troubled by a tooth, will pull it herself I have watche e operation and it is amazing She puts her head dow ntil she can grasp her foot chain in her mouth Then orking the chain back to and under the offending tooth e jerks her head back and knocks the tooth out Some mes she has to try several times before the tooth gives it she keeps trying There isn't as much crying and

[illegible]ing as when a doctor, in all innocence, gently touches [illegible]

Elephants' tusks cause continual trouble. We have found [illegible]

[illegible] even though the tusk has been cut off, frequently an [illegible]phant will break what remains. The problem then is to [illegible]

[illegible] the gum is hollow and the wall gets thinner and [illegible]

We had a Russian bear in an act. One day the trainer and his wife stopped me on the path to the hospital to ask me to take a look at the bear. He was eating poorly, they told me, and there were signs of wildness in what was otherwise a very gentle animal. (The "gentle" was theirs, not mine. Gentleness is something bears are not noted for. Intelligence, maybe. But not kindness.)

We walked into the cage. The trainer and his wife walked right in, purposefully, and I couldn't do anything but follow without making an issue of it. The trainer held the bear's head and his wife held the [illegible]

watch how he eats and also how he digests his foo(both functions are normal, the chances are that the ho teeth are all right

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ephant will break what remains The problem then is to pply a local anesthesia, then pick out as many fragments f the tusk as can be found in order to prevent infection.

ithin the gum is hollow and the wall gets thinner and hinner as the tusk extends inward This structure is similar o that of a cow's horn My post mortems on several elephants indicate the average length of the root of the tusk is about fifteen inches. The wall of the tusk at the very end is nearly as thin as an eggshell

and there were signs of wildness in what was otherwise a very gentle animal (The "gentle' was theirs, not mine Gentleness

over to us His powerful build and perfect proportions ha deceived me, I was surprised now to find him almost a head shorter than I

'Mr Dhotre,' said North, "this is Doc Henderson"

Tremendous force of personality was evident in his face Then, when he smiled in greeting, it was as though all th lights were suddenly switched on in a darkened house Hi were the whitest teeth I have ever seen

I was to become very friendly with Damoo Dhotre on of the most extraordinary combinations of personality have ever seen in a human being Damoo had been train ing animals since he was thirteen years old, which gav him at this time something more than twenty five year as an animal trainer He was strong and muscular He com bined the qualities of the physical daredevil and the Hind philosopher and mystic He studied his animals thorough and he knew them theoretically as well as personally Damoo was a person who never offered advice but who when asked would pour forth a bottomless store of pra tical help (But I will tell you something,' he woul say "I believe that every time anyone gets hurt by wild animal it is his own fault That goes for trainer too")

"What about doctoring these animals?' I asked hi now "Do they require very much?'

'Oh, yes," he said mainly because they fight so muc When you put different kinds of animals—natural enemie —in the ring, they fight All the time they fight—and the get hurt Sometimes badly'

'Is doctoring them as big a problem as I imagine?' asked

No" he said 'you call me when you have anything t do on my animals and I promise to keep them quiet fo you' And then he added what I had half-expected 'I will be difficult for you in the beginning but it isn't fo me because the animals know me We are friends"

[illegible]

those wild animals would also be doctored

The next morning North was on the job even before I checked in He called me into his office

"Doc," he said, "Tim the black bear died last night I didn t think he was as sick as all that or I would have used you"

"I am sorry to hear that, Mr North I really should have examined him yesterday Do you mind if I perform a post mortem?"

"I wish you would."

The animal was brought to my operating table where North stayed to watch I opened the bear and cut straight for the liver And there sure enough growing right on top of it, was a tremendous tumor

"Nice guess, Doc

I couldn t restrain a grin If a knowledge of dogs and cats and horses and pigs could really be transferred to their wild counterparts so easily then maybe I was going to be able to keep these seven hundred wild animals in pretty good physical condition.

Before the day was out, North invited me into one of the streamlined railroad cars took a key out of his pocket and opened the door

"This will be your stateroom on the road," he told me—and when my surprise must have showed "How did you think you were going to travel—cattle car?"

I laughed embarrassedly probably making it very obvious that that was exactly my thought

"We do have a cattle car for you he added, "in case

grown adult Not so with these—except for the horses, the were twice as large as I recalled What's more, some ha snarled, some had shown their teeth, worse still m simply stood with heads down and shrewd eyes fixed c me

Through an archway of the horse corral, Mr North r dicated a small white shed which, on one side, had little horse corral of its own

"That one is all yours Doc he said I read the sign o its door *Veterinary Department* Suddenly, I was n longer the fascinated visitor but a blooded member c the circus family not only a Doc but a whole departmen

It seemed as though trumpets should blare me acro my new threshold but the only blare I heard came fro the snores of a boy sleeping on a cot in the far corn This boy once awakened was introduced as my assistant

om early morning until late at night and frequently ight long, I was on the circus grounds This was not use of love of hard work or long hours—I hadn t been from Texas long enough for that I was plunged llong into an overpowering job I wanted to learn it it very rapidly and I was learning that for me there a lot to learn

or instance, once I pointed my finger—"What is that e animal there?

he menagerie superintendent looked over and laughed A cinnamon bear—and they aren t so little That haps to be a baby"

laughed too but until then I had thought vaguely t bears came in two varieties—bears and polar bears r circus owned five different kinds

* * *

The show had just come into winter quarters for the t four months all would first rest then the performers uld start practicing new tricks and in many cases new ts then for about a month the entire group together th new imports would be co-ordinated into a finished erformance for the road

Although now there was no daily packing and unpack g and while having all the animals permanently housed r the period was an advantage, life was busy and someimes hectic

The ... he ... ver

eak with vomiting because of the ocean trip and nervous because of their new surroundings Animals I have found are particularly sensitive to their neighbors Put one next to a different animal from the one he is used to and you are likely to have trouble I had known this to be true of

you have a very sick animal who needs sitting up with
the road"

He described to me what was to serve for years as
hospital car It was a car with just blank stalls in it—goo
sized stalls, with equipment to keep animals from fal
from train motion or illness—and sleeping quarters fo
or one of my assistants at the far end

'That is for you when you want to use it or need to
it' North said, 'otherwise, this stateroom is where y
live'

It proved more than comfortable living Pullman tra
even at its best could never be as homey as I was to fi
that circus setup

CHAPTER III Starting—with a Roar

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN the Florida climate it could ha
been the vigorous routine of life in the circus or perha
the complete change of every detail of my way of livi
effected the cure Not being an animal I don t pretend
be able to diagnose for myself The fact remains that th
next four months which comprised the busiest period
my life kept me so occupied that I completely fo go
about my illness due to the anthrax injection

into the flesh He was treading very lightly on that paw It was already badly infected

Mr 6

co

ill

en

e eats little

ork just as ... a anesthetic

We called a couple of boys from the adjoining animal houses over to help I made a lasso out of a long length of rope and after three or four tries managed to slip the noose over Arvid's neck one of his forepaws sticking through it (This was necessary because if neither paw had stuck through there was the danger of the noose tightening around his neck) To accomplish the trick we had to dangle the rope through the bars and tease Arvid with it and the bear being a playful animal instinctively stuck his head and a paw through the loop in a somewhat teasing somewhat exploratory manner Then we had him We tightened the noose, and then all four of us leaned on the rope, pulled him over and held him tightly against the bars of the cage We then put another rope around the injured paw and two more boys held that paw through the bars so that it couldn't move

While they held tight I went to work on Arvid

The operation itself was very simple a local anesthetic injected into the paw so that the bear wouldn't suffer any pain and amputation of the two broken toes Then I made an incision up higher large enough to drain the infection, and doused the paw with a good strong antiseptic The cage boy was instructed to sprinkle sulfa on Arvid's paw as often as he could get near him and the business was over It wasn't anything to write to one's veterinary school surgery professor about but as my first operation on a wild animal it stays in my memory more vividly than any I have performed since And for years whenever I had

horses and here it was true of practically every other that I came to know

At 6 30 every morning I reported to the little building, my hospital Here I would familiarize myself with my medicines and equipment and add to the list of supplies needed not only for winter quarters but for the road And here, on my second day, came my first "action"

I was looking over the interior of the hospital, wondering how best to convert one corner into a research laboratory, when a voice outside shouted the call which—though I didn't know it at the time—was to become my trademark

"Hey, Doc!'

Many years ago the cry 'Hey Rube!' brought circus hands running from all direction It meant "trouble" Its modern equivalent 'Hey Doc!' brings me running—frequently in all directions It too usually means trouble

I opened the door and yelled 'Hey?' It was John Sabo, the menagerie superintendent

'Doc, I've got a big black bear over there," he said "I thought since you were a little foggy about bears you might want to start learning Nothing very serious, but he has a broken claw and it s broken all the way up into the flesh I think it might be infected

I drew in my breath but said 'Sure John I ll be there in a minute" I put some instruments and antiseptics into my bag and started over This was it I felt a sort of stage fright, and that feeling stayed with me for a long, long time

Bears are both unfriendly and very untrustworthy Trainers and keepers have been mauled and killed by those that for years have acted like trained dogs Their claws are long and sharp, and they have enormous strength in their multipurpose arms

We examined the right forepaw of Arvid, the bear through the cage; it was evident that he had split it well up

I jotted in my notebook Whenever a new bear joins

ure there is no time for hesitation or research when an nal may be dying it was encouraging to me to find, and again, a point of reference in my former practice helped with wild animals

As I was walking back to the hosp tal that day a question ne—Was it a little foolish to walk into a bear s cage even ugh pretty sure he was too sick and too weak to be ngerous? Evidently he had accepted my manner A erinarian very seldom considers his a dangerous profes- n and yet even with domestic animals there is danger orse can kick a man s head off with one swift kick, and bull can be at least as dangerous as any animal known wever, you simply learn the animal s characteristics and en you can calmly and intelligently protect yourself would seem that the way to get along with wild animals the way you treat domestic animals fear none but spect all

Notes I made that day were useful but there are still nexpected mischances Sometimes a bear will show no mptoms of worms until it is too late to help him and a andsome menagerie polar bear died thus quite recently despite all our precautions

He had refused food the previous day and this day as he swallowed his first bite of food he went into convul sions and was dead before I could get to his cage Because his manner of dying made me suspect strychnine poison ing I started to perform a post mortem on him in the cage When I cut him open I noticed that the intestine just below the stomach was as hard as wood As I plunged the knife into it, the wall burst and worms sprayed into the air like water from a fire hose.

stage fright over work on a bear, John Sabo would remi me I'd had my "Arvid education"

* * *

My next contact with the bear family happened ju two days later, and that also made a lasting impression (me

A trainer had arrived in winter quarters from Germa with twelve trained polar bears He came running over t my hospital on this particular morning and I gathere from his screams that he was giving me the German equ valent of "Hey, Doc!' I followed him, wildly guessing a what equipment to take with me

In the cage one of his polar bears was in the midst c terrible convulsions It struck me—judging again by m dog experiences—that this looked very much like a cas of worms It didn t seem too likely, because these train animals are nursed like babies by their trainers and ar watched twenty four hours a day by either the trainer o the cage boy Their diet, too, is carefuly regulated Never theless, it did look like worms

We had the other bears run out of the cage quickly and the trainer and I gave the bear a shot of a sedative A test proved that my diagnosis was correct and I wormed him immediately In due time that one bear relieved himself of over half a gallon of long white worms

I figured that this must be a weakness of polar bears if it could happen to them under such close surveillance so next I gave the other bears the same treatment a do e of tetrachlorethylene to drug the worms followed an hour later by a strong purgative (Without the latter the bear might die of the worm poison or el e the worms might come to, hungrier and peppier than ever) Every one of these bears yielded at least a half gallon of worms In all my subsequent experiences with sick bears, particularly polar bears, I always suspect worm s first

I jotted in my notebook Whenever a new bear joins the show introduce yourself to him with a test for worms He may need a good stiff worming

The first of hundreds of routines had started

Since there is no time for hesitation or research when an animal may be dying it was encouraging to me to find, time and again a point of reference ... that helped

ca
the
in ... Evidently he had accepted my manner A ... d to weak to be
veterinarian very seldom considers his a dangerous profession, and yet even with domestic animals there is danger horse can kick a man s head off with one swift kick, and bull can be at least as dangerous as any animal known However you simply learn the animal s characteristics and then you can calmly and intelligently protect yourself would seem that the way to get along with wild animals the way you treat domestic animals fear none but respect all

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Apparently the worms, starved from the previous day had hit the upper intestine like a crowd of homeward bound New Yorkers raiding the BMT on a rainy night. Packed in just as tightly, they paralyzed the bear's intestines Bears, you see, are more vulnerable than subways.

The hospital needed straightening up, supplies needed ordering, I had to get acquainted with personnel and animals and all their various routines, and at the same time things kept happening One never knew what was coming next (That is a situation, I might say, that hasn't changed to this day A one-armed paperhanger is a slouch compared to a two armed circus veterinarian)

One noon during my first week I stopped at the horse corral for a routine check on two horses with colic, to make sure that the grooms were carrying out instructions (I never permit a horse with colic to be left alone, there is a chance of his lying down, and frequently he will toss around so that an intestine will loop around another, causing what is known as "twisted gut" When the gas hits the obstruction, the intestine ruptures After medicating

walk him, for hours if neces-

ystem)

happened to glance out the window and saw that Alfred Court was bringing his animals into the big outdoor cage for rehearsal I hadn't had time yet to see that act so now I watched, while he brought his animals in, directed each one to a pedestal, and then smoothly and apparently effortlessly put them through their very difficult paces

He was almost finished when he turned his back for a moment to get a piece of meat as a reward for a leopard As he did, a tiger sitting on a pedestal just left of a big male lion struck at the lion with his paw It might have been in play, or it might have been in anger; mixed groups present these mishaps

ie t eer's paw grazed the l
i instin
ie did h
ground
pedestal
ourt took one look at the lion and immediately drove
other animals through the chute back into their cages
called me over
Look at this, Doc, will you?" he said
walked to the bars of the cage and looked in at the
I nodded my head I saw what Court meant the jaw
definitely broken
"What do you think?" Court said
"I don t know," I answered "Have you ever heard of a
eration to mend a

ady, th
Neml

Similar operations had been performed on dogs, and I
ondered whether the lion's nature would permit an exact
mitation

A squeeze cage was being brought up against the door of
he lion s cage A squeeze cage is small, strong
wheels One end is a door
ides are fixed on
can gradually be cl . or opened
out The object of the squeeze cage is to hold a wild
animal immobile while he is being worked on, to keep him

squeeze cage have straight up-and-down bars The side have closer bars running in both directions in order to kee

squeeze cage If prodding doesn't work, a small piece of meat placed in the squeeze cage will do the trick The the door at the end of the squeeze cage is lowered and th handle wound until the animal is held, not tightly enoug to hurt him, but snugly enough so that he won't hurt an one else A good precaution is to rope the squeeze ca to the animal's cage before opening the doors

The first thing I had to do was anesthetize When th lion was safely in the squeeze cage I pricked a vein in h front leg and kept injecting the fluid slowly until he looke drowsy and began going limp Then the needle was with drawn and he collapsed on the floor and from that poi on we were out of danger—he would sleep from six t eight hours I believed

We moved the cage over to the hospital buildin opened it up and slid the lion onto the operating table examined his jaw and found that the lower jawbone w broken clean through in two places, leaving the enti center section hanging limp

When a dog has a broken jaw you wire the broke bones together; you then wire the lower jaw to the upp jaw, tightly, to keep his jaws clenched and completely i mobile Then till the bone knits you feed your dog b dripping milk slowly into the corner of his mouth whe

o the corner of his mouth We had to figure out an
ıer way

By considering where we must vary the usual plan, I
ought of something that might work Drilling holes on
· side of the two breaks through the lower jaw just
eath the gum line and using stiff wire, I laced the cen
broken section of the jaw to the two outer sections,
is would hold the entire lower jawbone solid in one
ece to heal but there was still the problem of keeping
e l on from moving this jaw and at the same time allow
g him to eat I took two blocks of wood each about two
ıches thick. One block fitted between upper and lower
olars on each side, leaving room for his tongue between
ıem More holes were bored to lace wires through the
wbones top and bottom his jaws being wired tightly
et separated by those blocks of wood

This meant that the entire lower jaw was solid in one
iece, and both upper and lower jaws were being held firm
ut h s mouth was permanently open because of those
locks of wood Because the center section had no wood,
e could get his tongue out to lap up milk The only
question that bothered me was whether for the six or eight
weeks it would take the jaw to set milk would give him
the nourishment he needed

After we had finished working I sewed him up and

... u u s ca.e

The operation had taken three hours Court and I
looked at each other and it was hard to tell which of us
was more tired We had shared the nervous strain and
· nce he as isted me throughout the operation our physical
labor was equally d vided as well My strain was due to the
f ct that I wanted this operation to be a success His was
d e to the fact that a trainer does become attached to his

squeeze cage have straight up-and-down bars The sides have closer bars running in both directions in order to keep the animal from getting his claws through By bringing this squeeze cage up to the door of the lion's cage and opening both doors it is usually an easy matter to prod him into the squeeze cage If prodding doesn't work, a small piece of meat placed in the squeeze cage will do the trick Then the door at the end of the squeeze cage is lowered and the handle wound until the animal is held, not tightly enough to hurt him, but snugly enough so that he won't hurt anyone else A good precaution is to rope the squeeze cage to the animal's cage before opening the doors

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When a dog has a broken jaw you wire the broken bones together; you then wire the lower jaw to the upper jaw, tightly, to keep his jaws clenched and completely immobile Then till the bone knits you feed your dog by dripping milk slowly into the corner of his mouth where the flesh is loose

[illegible] idea First of all, [illegible] two shifts to dri [illegible] uth Secondly (though numerical sequences may well be reversed), you would have a difficult time finding men who would be willing to stand alongside a [illegible]

There was understanding between us, and although in [illegible]

Just a few days after this operation on Court's lion, I was [st]anding outside the cat barn having my first lengthy chat [wi]th Damoo Dhotre He was wearing a tan T shirt and [illegible]

[w]atching his animals I had observed how they did every[th]ing but now I wanted to know why they did it

While we were talking I noticed that the cage boys were [r]unning some of Damoo's cats from their cages in the cat [b]arn into the chute which connects with the outdoor train[i]ng ring There were leopards, panthers, black jaguars, [p]umas. As each animal was driven forward into the chute, [a] board was inserted partitioning him off in his own cell

I had noticed this out of the corner of my eye, and [d]uring a break in the conversation, I pointed and said to Damoo "How con [illegible]

"Oh," he said [illegible]

work" He snuffed [illegible]

me

"You will pardon me please? I must work for a while I will be free in a half hour and we can talk some more" Whereupon he walked the few yards to the cage, opened the door swung himself in, latched the door after him and then gave the signal to the cage boys to let the cats into the ring with him

My first wild animal interest was the big cats—and to this day I think it is the greatest That may be because they [ar]e the most terrifying Actually, I think my interest is a

animals, almost the way a parent does to his chil'

The next morning the lion was full of pep and when came up to his cage he was assiduously lapping up al milk the boys could put in his cage After the third day began pulverizing meat and putting it in the milk found that he was able to get most of this meat up his tongue and to swallow it without chewing He some weight, but he came through that operation fully and recovered completely

Six weeks later we anesthetized him again opened jaw up and removed the wire The jaw had knit perfect the bone was smooth and straight and hard, and we had a completely healthy lion who went back into the ring and performed just as well as he ever had before He lived years after that, when he finally did die, not so very long ago, it was from old age

I had hoped that nothing of this sort would turn up quite so soon, but in looking back on it I think perhaps this operation, coming when it did, is the luckiest thing that happened to me during that period This was no routine treatment It was something for which there was little any precedent If it hadn t worked I don't know how I would have felt The fact that it was successful gave me an amount of confidence that I needed badly at that time and which I am sure enabled me to save the lives of countless other animals during the ensuing months

Alfred Court and I were friends and saw a great deal of each other until he retired quite recently The friendship dated from this operation As we worked together, both to the same end, each of us realized—without either of us saying anything—that we were men who were happiest when we were working for and with animals We weren't misanthropes our relationships with people were excellent and enjoyable but we were more at home with animals When there had been a choice in our lives, each of us had always made the decision that kept us close to animals

cats The male can usually be identified by the tremendous mane on the back of his head and around his neck The lion is a little less fierce than people imagine He is a noisy animal, and noisy animals like noisy people are ... friends The Lion mal... gent. He can be ta... young He is a nice a... ...ould

Trainers, however have been attacked by lions they have even been killed by them While I was working on this book, Mae Kovar whom I knew well when she was an animal trainer for Ringling Brothers, was killed by a lion in California When a lion attacks he will never spring in one leap and land on you the way some of the other cats will He is more likely to come in rushes, or he will knock you down with his paw His claws are long and sharp His paw is heavy and can easily break a man s back or his neck before the animal pounces on him The lion is most dangerous when males and females are in the ring together

It was Damoo who pointed out to me that of all the male cats, the lion is the only one that travels in prides or groups The tigers, the leopards, the panthers, all travel either singly or in pairs That makes an important difference In the jungle, when a lioness in the pride comes in heat all the males will fight over her They will fight until one emerges the victor He may have left a train of dead, maimed, or simply wounded animals behind That victorious male and the female go off together many, many times away in almost complete hiding, and there they have what amounts to a honeymoon They stay away two or three weeks Most of that time they neither hunt nor eat, and should any unfortunate animal or man come in their way he is quickly disposed of

That same jungle in tact doesn t leave a lion because he happens to be driven onto a ship and quartered in a circus many thousands of miles away from home. Wild animals have to be reminded ... e never tame they can be

combination of admiration for their beauty and dign and the challenge they present to any man, be he train doctor, or cage boy Visitors to winter quarters by thousands stand in front of the cages of these animals a almost invariably call them by the wrong name A m will stand in front of a leopard cage and say to his wi 'Come over here, Mary, and look at these tigers'

It seemed odd to me that this should be so until I membered that except in our largest cities there are zoos and the vast majority of our population never has t chance to see wild animals That accounted, I suppose for the tremendous popularity of the circus menager when the show went on the road This was the only z many people ever saw, and a considerable zoo it was

As a result of my friendship with Court and Dhotre ar my increasing fondness for the cats, I now began to lea more about them than I had ever known before I talk to the cat men I read animal books

The commonly found cats in our zoos and circuses a the lions, tigers, leopards, black panthers, jaguars, blac jaguars, and then some of the smaller ones such as ocelot cougars, wildcats The differences are rather striking

The lion, of course, has long been known as the King Beasts I asked Damoo once whether he felt the title just fied

"Yes' he said, 'in my opinion it is First of all, he look the part He looks like a king He has size he has dignity he has what appears to be great pride Secondly, eve though some of the smaller animals can attack faster tha he can the long hair around his neck usually prevents hi getting killed by them I think, Damoo concluded, 'tha if there is a king of the jungle, the lion certainly earns th title'

The lion is one of the few animals that nearly everybody recognizes It comes from Africa It is the latest of the

cats The male can usually be identified by the tremendous mane on the back of his head and around his neck. The lion is a little less fierce than people imagine He is a noisy animal, and noisy animals like noisy people are usually friendly The lion makes friends easily He is highly intelligent. He can be taught tricks rather easily if he is caught young He is a nice animal to have around

Trainers, however, have been attacked by lions; they have even been killed by them While I was working on his book, Mae Kovar whom I knew well when she was an animal trainer for Ringling Brothers, was killed by a lion in California When a lion attacks he will never spring in one leap and land on you the way some of the other cats will He is more likely to come in rushes, or he will knock you down with his paw His claws are long and sharp His paw is heavy and can easily break a man s back or his neck before the animal pounces on him The lion is most dangerous when males and females are in the ring together

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That same jungle instinct doesn't leave a lion because he happens to be driven onto a ship and quartered in a circus many thousands of miles away from home. Wild animals, we have to be reminded are never tame; they can be

trained with patience to do certain tricks but they a still wild in every respect

In the ring when a female lion comes into heat tl males as a rule don t fight only because the trainer h them under control They have been punished in the pa for fighting in the ring and remembering that punishmen they stay on their pedestals But they do growl at ea other and every instinct urges them to fight They are e tremely nervous At this time they are very unpleasant is at this point that any slight change from the usual voice or movement—anything at all unfamiliar that th trainer does—is likely another animal make peated it is likely to c point he will attack either the other animal or perhap the trainer himself For that reason many trainers w remove the female from the act during the time she is heat

A very good friend of mine Dick Clemens was attacke twice in one recent season by a lion at the time a femal in the cage was in heat Once a lion knocked him dov and mauled him The other time he bit him through th shoulder At that point the relationship became so straine that Clemens had to take this lion out of his act Yet i this case the lion was a bottle fed pet of Clemens s He ha been carefully raised and trained by Dick from the tim the animal was a cub Nevertheless when jungle instinc comes to the fore even domestic born lions are blinded t things like loyalty and friendship He reminded everybod that he was a jungle animal

Lion acts are sensational because the animals are large because they do look fierce and because a trainer who ca train a lion to feign attack can make himself look like very great hero indeed

Tigers are the ones with stripes They are considered by many trainers the most vicious and the least reliable of

r Both animals are extremely vicious They are quick; ey have mean tempers; but they also have a high degree intelligence and can be trained to do a number of amaz ng tricks

Damoo tells that when he started learning about animal aining, at the age of thirteen, his first trick was to ride tiger around the ring His teacher told him, "If you can arn to get along with tigers, nothing will keep you from eing a great animal man"

The tiger is the largest of the cats next to the lion, fre quently measuring twelve to thirteen feet from nose to tail, nd weighing up to four hundred and fifty pounds In ction, the tiger probably looks fiercer than any of the ther cats

The leopard is a comparatively small, spotted animal

[illegible]

on hide on the limb of a tree and leap on any passing prey Many naturalists contend that he is the best-camouflaged animal in the jungle [illegible]

[illegible]

he has two leopards who permit him to carry them around his neck like fur pieces even though they weigh in the neighborhood of one hundred and fifty pounds

The black panther is actually a freak leopard Like humans, some animals are melanistic—that is, born with an excess of black pigment, a condition opposite to albinoism, or lack of pigment. A spotted leopard may have a litter

containing one or more black leopards likewise breeding two black leopards may produce either black or spotted c both

This is the animal normally called the "panther" (though various countries often refer to some local anim as a panther) If you ever look at this sort of panthe closely you will find that although his coat seems to b solid black, he actually contains the same spotting as leopard in a black of even darker intensity than the rest o the coat He is a freak, and perhaps because he is poorl camouflaged for the jungle the black panther is eve quicker than the leopard and is commonly considered th most dangerous animal to work with He is almost impos sible to make friends with, and sometimes doesn't p

its, when th

playful—jus

on the othe

hand, develops into a snarling mass of fury within a few weeks after he is born He seems to know that things ar going to be tough for one whose color deviates, and literall comes out fighting He gets worse and worse throughout his life, and can be controlled only through sheer will power and patience on the part of the trainer He always remains a sullen and somewhat reluctant pupil

The spotted jaguar looks like a leopard but is native to the Western Hemisphere from Texas to Paraguay He i slightly larger and more heavily built than the Asiatic or African leopard, and his face is larger and more triangular His head and neck have a similarity to a bull s rather than a cat's The jaguar is normally not too bright, although he can be trained, and he has the same kind of meanne that a leopard has It is seldom that one finds trainers going out of their way to work with him

The black jaguar has the same relation to the spotted jaguar as the panther does to the spotted leopard It is a freak It is poorly camouflaged and it is a vicious violent

animal. A trainer very seldom works with black jaguars because it isn't apparent to the audience that he is performing one of the most difficult jobs in wild animal training, and seems therefore not worth while. Damoo Dhotre, however, has a pair of black jaguars—for many years, I believe, the only trained ones in this country. He has taught them to do a number of difficult tricks including that of allowing themselves to be carried around his neck. Considering that Negus, the male, once used to attack Damoo every time they were in the ring together, this is something of a feat. But the average onlooker won't consider it as exciting as seeing Damoo with a leopard around his neck. What the onlooker doesn't know is that this is something personal.

Negus is the only animal of some hundreds that he has worked with that continued creating trouble for Damoo over a long period of time. Purely as a personal matter, Damoo determined that he was going to subdue and carry this animal on his shoulders before another ye... Dangerous? Indescribably. D... aren't built of this ... business of training.

These were the various types of cats we had when I joined the show. Training any of them takes courage, skill, and patience, and a very long apprenticeship. Pouring a mixed assortment of them into one cage at one time takes even more and is the most admired feat of all.

All wild animal trainers will admit that once an animal is completely out of control there is nothing a trainer can do. Although there is a common belief that in a pinch the trainer can pull out his revolver and shoot the animal dead, this is certainly never done in the Ringling Brothers circus and I doubt that it is resorted to elsewhere.

During my introduction to circus life and animal training I was surprised to learn that there wasn't a gun carried by anyone connected with the organization—unless per

haps in the pay wagon The explanation seems logic enough As Alfred Court said to me once What would you do with a gun? With an audience completely surrounding you if you missed the animal you would undoubtedly hit one or more spectators and he added your chances of missing the animal would be excellent Remember his attack is sudden He is coming at you He is moving He is in the middle of a leap He is diving *O* you have come to the point of realizing that a stick can hold him off he is almost on you You fire at a quickly moving target The chances of hitting him with one shot out of one try are almost negligible Even if you are lucky enough to do that you probably won t save yourself because he continues his leap which he has started He probably won t die instantaneously because your aim can t be that good on a moving target and so you still get hurt or killed

Their safety depends on their ability to keep the animals under control or to defend themselves in other ways against any animal out of control

I spent many hours during those first few months leaning on a fence outside the cat barn talking to Alfred and Damoo I believe I like cats partly because of my fondness for these two men but I think it worked the other way too because I was fond of cats I instinctively liked these men and was fascinated by their profession

Both of them seemed in many ways rather paradoxical Alfred Court not only had the iron nerve and the physical dominance that all animal trainers must have but he was also a very courteous almost Old World courtly person His name might almost have been tailored for him

Damoo although short of stature, often impresses his audiences as a giant He too has an air of physical dominance including a sort of daredevil quality But Damoo is also something of an intellectual He is steeped in a back

round of Hindu philosophy and Hindu mysticism Although his life has not included more than five months of formal education, he is one of the most learned men I have ever met. His knowledge of animals is thoroughly practical, but since he has a keen interest in the animals he works [illegible] book on wild animals [illegible]

one of the most enlightening experiences in the world

Like Tarzan, for whom he once doubled in a movie, Damoo was raised with wild animals He was born in India and at the age of thirteen had already spent three years in his uncle's circus Those years were spent as an acrobat, clown, and trick bicycle rider but at thirteen he began training lions, as a student animal trainer By the time he was seventeen he was well known throughout India as a daredevil bicycle acrobat and an equally daredevil animal trainer

He has had many narrow escapes He has on many occasions been attacked [illegible]

many times," he says "and every time it was my own fault"

Most trainers agree that the chief fault among trainers and the chief reason for their being hurt is that they become overconfident and are inclined to forget that their animals are still jungle creatures The trainer who remembers this is always on his guard The trainer who doesn't eventually gets hurt or killed

When I would see Damoo or Alfred casually walking into the ring with their animals, practicing their acts fighting off unruly animals, and coming out again to have a

frankfurter between rehearsals, I would ask them wheth they ever worried about getting hurt someday It seem impossible that they did, and at the same time it seem unlikely that they wouldn't What I learned was that parently with all wild animal trainers there is usually fear as the rest of us know it Dimoo has told me ma times that he is thoroughly aware of danger, that he kno just what each animal is likely to do to him, but this 'fear as he calls it, is apparently a mental process, not an em tional one On the other hand, I have seen animal traine who on certain days seemed really frightened.

I, myself, on the many occasions when I have gone in a cage with a wild animal, have usually been frightene Through my own experiences and through talking to wi animal trainers I have evolved a theory that is at odds w that of the medical profession

I had always heard that animals could "smell fear", th if a human were really afraid of an animal, the anim would know it no matter what the person did to cover up I think this is wrong I think I can provide eviden to make a case for the fact that animals cannot smell fe that fear is not something tangible I think animals ca sense fear, but I think they get it through the tone of a pe son's voice and from his actions I myself have handle horses, mean horses, of whom I was terrified, but by kee ing my voice stern and my actions definite, I was able t keep that fact from the animals Some of these horses, know, would have kicked me into a corner if they ha been able to smell my uncertainty And I have gone in cages with bears and leopards who would have attacke me instinctively if they had felt I was bluffing my contr

One day as I was walking over to the outdoor ring to watch Damoo rehearse his act, I noticed a cluster of people around one of the cages. I ran over to the cage. Damoo, who spends all his free hours walking up and down in front of the cages making friends with his animals and keeping an eye on them, had discovered a break in the tail of Lima, one of his pumas.

Together we looked at the tail. Yes, definitely broken . . .

(We never discovered how this happened. It might have been clawed by a neighbor, although there were no claw marks. Sometimes when an animal is being shuttled from one cage to another, the cage boy swings the iron gate closed behind the animal too quickly while transferring him. A cat, as soon as he is through a gate, often swings around and starts through in the other direction. For this reason, the boys learn to work very rapidly closing the gates, and it may have been that Lima got her tail caught and broken that way.)

She didn't seem to be in pain. We decided that together we would run her into the squeeze cage and Damoo could go ahead and work the rest of the animals while I operated. I had never mended a puma's tail before, but of course I had had similar operations on domestic animals.

I had a couple of the cage boys hold her forepaws out through the bars of the squeeze cage and I gave her an injection of Nembutal. When she was asleep I opened the back end of the squeeze cage—I didn't bother to remove her because this operation didn't take very long—and set the tail, binding it tightly with a plaster cast which I hoped she wouldn't chew up too soon.

I watched her very carefully for the next few days. Although at first the cast bothered her and she did chew at it a little bit, she left enough on for protection, the tail stayed in place and the mere fact that there was an annoyance there tended to make Lima conscious enough of the tail to avoid swinging it around or getting it caught in places

that might have injured it When we removed the c her tail was perfectly straight Damoo put her right h into the act and she was an entirely healthy and prese able animal

I stumbled across some amazing facts during those f few weeks that big cats have sinus trouble for instan Alfred Court had suspected this for a long time, and n whenever an animal of his appeared sluggish he would c me over and we would examine it Everything I found co firmed his suspicion On certain days, certain of the li would hang their heads low, indicating headache Th would be either ill tempered or completely spiritless, d pending on the individual animal

I found that letting an animal rest for a couple of da would usually help him recover and frequently, min aspirin in his food would speed the process—30 grains to lion, 15 grains to a leopard, 60 grains to a horse. (T grains is the adult human dose)

I knew that horses frequently suffer from sinus troub when a cold is neglected and the animal is worked t hard What apparently happens is that the cold in his s ... k po ... you a ... ouble both horses and dogs In these cases, as with huma aspirin relieves the pain There have been a few horses which I have actually had to operate to drain the infectio but these cases are rare and I do it only when absolute necessary

I had bought a rather large and as I recall an expens black leather bound notebook, and here it was I beg writing down jottings of new information observatio theories and just plain facts This I hoped would be usef on the road when things were rushed and we were workin

on a tight schedule when I didn't have time to sit and chat with trainers and cage boys and menagerie men before making decisions

CHAPTER IV Elephants Have Tender Skins

SOMETIMES one recalls vividly certain experiences without being able to understand the importance of their details or why memory retains them

When I was about five a neighbor took me for a ride in his new and in those days revolutionary automobile I asked for something during the ride—ice cream I think—and he said very positively "Nosiree!" I don't know why I have gone on remembering that so clearly but every time I saw that neighbor after that, although he was fond of me and went out of his way to do little favors I wanted to run

Likewise, I will always remember the day I discovered that elephants have tender skins but this memory I do understand—and for a very good reason The story starts back a bit, just before I joined the show

Toward the end of the tour that year there was a tragedy in Atlanta Atlanta was on the swingback toward winter quarters and the show was to play there in October Just about the time John Ringling North was telephoning me

to offer me the job, the circus train was pulling into th
Atlanta siding and preparing to unload

Suddenly one after another, the elephants dropped c
the ground By the time the boys were ready to walk the
to the lot most of the animals were out cold

The newspapers made a good deal of it at the time be
cause there was something of a mystery attached to it Ob
viously, the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey el
phant herd had been poisoned

A number of the animals died very quickly The oth
were saved, although some of them were violently sick f
a while Nobody could imagine who would dislike ele
phants enough to feed them poison What made the mys
tery even deeper was the fact that the elephant herd i
never unguarded It is guarded partly to keep people fro
teasing or hurting the animals and partly to keep the an
mals under control If one elephant should ever break
loose and go on a rampage the tendency is for the other
to do so

In this particular case the elephants had been watche
very carefully and yet had been poisoned The survivin
elephants were treated on the spot Post mortems we
performed on the dead elephants and it was determined
by laboratory tests that arsenic had killed them

The mystery was finally solved when it was found tha
not too far from the railroad siding at the previous st
there had been a chemical factory Among the waste mate
rials which it scattered—it supposed harmlessly—over the
surrounding territory was arsenic When, quite innocently
the elephants' hay had been scattered over this arseni
covered ground some of the animals had taken enough to
kill them Those that didn t die still took enough to get
sick

The veterinarian who treated the elephants gave a medi
cine intravenously in the ear In several cases, some of th

..cre got out of the vein into the tender tissue of the ..rd abscessed

..y the time I joined the circus, we had some thirty ele..nts with abscesses behind their ears Walter McClain ..ke the news to me The elephants had had these ab..sses for some weeks before I got there, but they weren't .. serious McClain knew that as soon as a veterinarian ..s hired he could take care of them He was also smart ..ough not to confront me with a problem like that dur-

..mself We chatted idly for thirty minutes or so and then .. asked, "Doc, you know much about elephants?"

"No, I don t know anything about elephants"

"Doc, we've got some sick elephants"

"That's just fine," I said "What s wrong with them?"

"Well,' he said, "you remember reading about the ..isoning in Atlanta A lot of them are still suffering from ..e aftereffects"

"Well, I ll see what can be done about it," I said. "Do ..hey let you treat them?"

"Yes," he said slowly "I think maybe the two of us ..ight be able to manage On the whole they are fairly ..alm while you are treating them—that is, of course, if you ..

.. untrustworthy, highly intelligent, yes—probably the most intelligent of all wild animals except chimps But ..also mean, unpredictable. They have been known to at

tack, for no apparent reason Despite my qualms, they h
to be worked on, however, and I was only thankful an i
telligent elephant man like Walter McClain was around
help I got some of my equipment together and we star
walking over to the elephant kraal

"I'll tell you one thing about these elephant abscesse
Walter said "Just draining won't be enough I guess y
would call them incapsulated abscesses, because what h
pens is that a capsule seems to have formed between t
cartilage and the skin Instead of just digging a hole a
draining, you'll have to cut and actually remove the wh
capsule"

"Well," I said, "let me open one up and I ll soon f
out"

The elephant kraal is really a row of open sheds form
into a square with a watering trough in the center As y
enter, you find four solid rows of elephants staring at y
from around the sides Each is chained to a ring embedd
in concrete by one hind and one front leg There is a lo
chain strung across in front of each row of animals to ke
people from getting too close to them In the circus, th
known as the "picket line"

The elephant who was in particular pain this day w
named Jenny She was restless She was moving her he
in circles and stamping her feet Walter and I approach
her cautiously, and Walter grabbed the elephant hook

This is a stick about the length of a broom handle O
the end of it is a small, dull hook This hook is used by a
elephant men in leading and training elephants It doesn
hurt the animal, but it tugs at her in one direction or a
other and she soon learns to respect orders given by mea
of the hook

Walter got in front of Jenny, holding her trunk up an
her head down I could just about reach the area in bac
of the ear where it was necessary to operate As soon as

uched her, Jenny started bobbing her head and weaving espite the hook

"Why is she bouncing so much?" I asked Walter anxi usly "I am not hurting her I am just patting her ear"

"Touching them can drive them nearly crazy," Walter id "Didn't you know, Doc, that elephants have very ender skins?"

"Are you kidding?" I scoffed, slapping my hand sharply n Jenny's gray hide to disprove Walter's joke To my mazement Jenny never flinched She even seemed to alm.

"That's what I mean, Doc,' Walter laughed "They love a firm slap, but a fly or a tickle on their skin will drive them crazy"

I was being crowded by the elephant next to Jenny because the elephants on the picket line are chained rather close to each other I took out my syringe and, after mopping the area with antiseptic, injected a local anesthetic just to be sure An anesthetic isn't very good for this kind of thing usually, because an animal can fight the injection as much as the operation and an infected part like this isn't too responsive because of the fact that the infec-

Suddenly, without my knowing it the elephant next in line—for what reason I will never know—dropped her trunk on the

a clip

Had

and as my weight made it go taut, it sprung me back I landed flat on my back underneath Jenny

I lay sprawled on the ground, half stunned more sc than I have ever been in my life, when Jenny's bla overflowed Then I moved so fast that it might be scribed as bouncing

Only one thin-
and there, and th
the hook and he
forth and laugh
mediately and I managed to pull myself together pa up my dampened dignity, and, in a much calmer fram mind, continue the operation

I have had hundreds of such operations since but I h never liked them—not one As a general rule, the abs becomes as big as a man s hand and I have to mak correspondingly big opening through which to work T abscess must be packed with silver nitrate to loo en t capsule, and then worked around and around by hand u the entire capsule is loosened and can be taken out thro the opening It is seldom painful to the elephant but th make a terrible fuss simply because they do not like to handled

Elephants I fear could never be influenced by the 's feminine touch

An elephant will invariably toss hay and dirt or wh ever he can get his trunk around onto his back It is s dom you see an elephant without this layer of dirt and h on his back The hay and dirt is insulation against t pricks and tickles of flies and mosquitoes an elephant worst enemies This surprised me because I had alwa thought as [illegible] ost peo le do, that an elephant a thick skir [illegible] ks that way I hav learned th [illegible] ses also have te der skins [illegible] them is to wa up and [illegible] thing t

member when considering walking up to pat a hippo)
An elephant s normal temperature is ninty nine to a hundred degrees but the temperature of the veterinarian taking it always shoots sky high when he is trying to get a reading on an elephant The thermometer is about four inches long but it is breakable, and it can be lost—I always tie a string to the one I am using so I can recover it And whenever the performance of temperature taking is neces ry I always like to have the elephant trainer handy When the trainer is around the animal has a combination of both fear and confidence He has a fear of doing something he is not supposed to do and the confidence that no harm will come to him Sometimes the trainer himself will take the elephant s temperature More often he will stand at the animal s head and talk to her and just gener y keep her calm while I try to get the reading

When we do find an elephant with a high temperature and other symptoms of stomach upset we have our work pleasantly cut out for us A horse can be fed a laxative or any other medicine by means of a capsule There's no knack at all to making a horse swallow such a capsule This is not true of an elephant An elephant s mouth can t be held open His teeth are hard and strong and you can t take a chance on putting your hand in his mouth if you are trying to make him do something he doesn t want to do He won t swallow anything he doesn t want to swallow and his tongue is so powerful that nothing can get past it if the giant doesn t approve All in all, he is a difficult patient

The first time one of Walter McClain s elephants got an upset stomach I decided simply to feed her a laxative through a stomach tube That d dn t work It would work on any other animal to get a tube into the stomach you put it through the nose. Well It next became a mat ter of working with the trainer and holding the elephant s trunk and trying to get her to swill down the laxative

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member when considering walking up to pat a hippo)

An elephant's normal temperature is ninety nine to a [illegible]

tie a string to the one I am using so I can recover it. And whenever the performance of temperature taking is necessary, I always like to have the elephant trainer handy When the trainer is around, the animal has a combination of both fear and confidence He has a fear of doing something he is not supposed to do, and the confidence that no harm will come to him Sometimes the trainer, himself, will take the elephant s temperature More often he will stand at the animal s head and talk to her and just generally keep her calm while I try to get the reading

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Only one thing saved me from giving up the circus then and there, and that was [illegible] the hook and he was do[illegible] forth and laughing fit to kill His attitude eased me immediately and I managed to pull myself together, patch up my dampened dignity, and, in a much calmer frame of mind, continue the operation

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member when considering walking up to pat a hippo)

An elephant's normal temperature is ninety nine to a [illegible]

inches long, but it is breakable; and it can be lost—I always tie a string to the one I am using so I can recover it And whenever the performance of temperature taking is necessary, I always like to have the elephant trainer handy When the trainer is around the animal has a combination of both fear and confidence He has a fear of doing something he [illegible] the confidence that [illegible] s the trainer, himself, [illegible] More often, he will stand at the animal s head and talk to her and just generally keep her calm while I try to get the reading

When we do find an elephant with a high temperature and other symptoms of stomach upset, we have our work unpleasantly cut out for us A horse can be fed a laxative or any other medicine by means of a capsule There s no trick at all to making a horse swallow such a capsule This is not true of an elephant An elephant s mouth can t be held open His teeth are hard and strong and you can t take a chance on putting your hand in his mouth if you are making him do something he doesn t want to do He won't swallow anything he doesn t want to swallow, and his [illegible]

[illegible] decided *simply to feed her a laxative* [illegible]

[illegible] trying to get her to swill down the laxative

(The normal laxative dose for an elephant is one gallon of raw linseed oil)

The elephant was Eva It took about five gallons before we got one gallon into Eva's stomach She would stick her trunk in her mouth, draw out the medicine we had managed to pour in and squirt it all over Walter and me We sloshed around ankle deep in laxative, and decided sadly that as a general routine this was not going to work A new system was called for

I next tried a medicine called Lentin, and this later became my standard elephant procedure Lentin is a laxative that can be given by injection It is extremely strong and has to be administered with great care It immediately starts secretion of all the glands in the body and it works in about ten minutes If there is a danger that the animal may have an obstruction in his intestine, Lentin can kill him

Elephants come down with chills frequently, exactly the way horses do It is easy to medicate a horse with brandy using a dose syringe but an elephant is almost impossible to treat with a dose syringe A dose syringe is long enough to reach way back into an animals mouth, by holding the animal s head back and unloading the syringe you can make him swallow Not an elephant When they have chills and won t take brandy I give them an injection of camphorated oil and guaiacol or some similar preparation

The elephants have always been a sort of veterinarian's nuisance factor, because they seldom get anything very serious but they are continually ailing with one little thing or another For instance, very often a tusk will break and the root will have to be extracted (what I do then is to cut back three or four inches and pick out the broken pieces of tusk)

All of our elephants are females because we have found

..at the males tend to be troublemakers Since elephants won t b eed very well in captivity, there is no advantage in having males

We make it a practice to remove a large portion of the tusk as soon as we get an elephant, so if she should start to make trouble, she will be a good deal less dangerous th n he would be if she st ll h ... irst day s qualms t ... usk is a fantastic ... oaxes her down on her knees and I take her tusks off about four inches from her cheeks with a hack saw There is no ... nativity and the elephants don t seem to mind the car... ... ntering in the least!

When Walter McCla n was al ve—he met a tragic death ... ortly after I jo ned the circus—he and I used to talk fre... ently about breeding elephants It has proved to be ... tually impossible, at least in this country There have ... en reports from Germany and Italy that elephants have ... n bred in captivity and the offspring have lived As far ... can check this has not happened in this country There have been a negl gible number of cases of elephants having been bred but none where the offspring have lived over thirty days I th nk the reason for this is that the elephants must be left alone and must be kept very calm and un... ... x ited befo e they will breed

I would like, someday to buy a good male elephant, pick ... ee or fou of our better females and put them off four ... r five miles from the circus grounds in a l ... ge pen by themselves ... ... ten with them to tak... ... se from com ng nea... ... unds, by automobiles—left alone in the wi derness, as it ... re—I th nk they might stand a pretty good chance of ... oducing healthy offspring If so it would be a famous ... st" in th s country and I think the publ city value to ... circus would be immense

Elephant men are among the busiest of animal men, because their charges are probably the only ones in captivity that need manicuring. Elephants have all kinds of trouble with their feet. Their pads get sore, they become infected, they have the same kind of cuticle trouble human beings do, only worse. An elephant man's spare time is usually spent working on cuticles, paring toe nails, polishing, rubbing with antiseptic, and, if the elephant act is going to be extremely fancy that year, actually applying fingernail polish.

Our elephants have to walk on concrete going to and from the lots. We have found that it is rather hard on their feet. To avoid serious trouble, we examine each elephant's feet every day. We look for cracks, breaks, and slight infections, and treatment begins at once before the animal becomes lame. This is good for the animal and we have found that the time spent is decidedly worth our while.

Sometimes our elephant charges turn up with new, unknown diseases. I had a phone call recently from an animal man in St. Louis. He had a trained elephant act and one of the elephants had developed a rather prominent swelling under the belly over an area of perhaps two and a half or three feet. He had asked a couple of local veterinarians but they were pretty much in the dark because there is nothing in horses that corresponds to it. I had run across a minor case only once in the circus, but I told him to apply hot towels, to keep the animal's belly cased in hot packs, held on with a sling, and to keep constantly wetting them. I also suggested that he give her streptomycin daily for five days. As far as I could guess, it was a toxic condition caused by an infection somewhere in the elephant's system and it was collecting under the skin at the lowest portion of the animal's body. I doubted very much if it was an infection of that immediate area, or that it was

serious infection anywhere else The trainer treated the animal as I suggested and checked with me by phone very day Within two weeks his elephant was all right and the ailment never recurred

Particularly as they grow older, elephants are likely to suffer from paralyzed trunk. A sort of creeping paralysis comes over this vital part, and although the animal can move it the trunk does not have its usual flexibility nor does it have its normal strength An elephant with paralyzed trunk can feed himself pretty well, but instead of being able to trunk up and drop his food into his mouth, he has to toss his head and catch his meal in mid air

The minor ailments can usually be put into the hands of the elephant boys, as for instance when their skins get dry and have to be oiled Once the proper oil has been given to the boy, he can rub it in as well or better than I, because he is there all the time and the animal knows him

Elephants bite each other s tails, partly out of nervousness and partly because that s the way elephants are. The tails get infected at the bitten part and they have to be treated continually with hot packs and sulfa and other [illegible] a hurt [illegible] afe, and [illegible] a good,

I got over most of [illegible]

[illegible]

per chants, apparently, she calmed the patient while I treated her I became, in time, quite attached to Ruth, and she is still my chief assistant in my elephant work

I'll always remember how I learned about elephan
from Jenny, but animal men agree that elephants on the
ly when the night
that they and the
a little while

CHAPTER V We Don't Shoot Them Any More

I LIKE HORSES I know they are excitable and have to b
watched carefully and I will admit they aren't as smart a
some of the other animals They get injured easily an
don't take care of themselves too well But I like them

It may be that my accumulation of knowledge abou
them does things for my ego I don't know what the reaso
is It doesn't make any difference When I am workin
with horses no matter how hard the work or how lon
the hours, I am contented

I like horses I know how they act and why I think I
know what goes on in their heads I know how to tell a
horse what I am thinking and I know how to figure ou
what he is thinking I have taught horses practically every
thing you can teach a horse, and I have learned a lot from
them too

A horse can be the most beautiful animal in the world

if he is healthy and well-cared for He can be a good com panion for the long pull, or a means of escape in a crisis Horses can save you or ruin you, hurt you or protect you They surpass all other animals in their ability to respond to human attention I like them

During my first weeks in Sarasota I was lonesome—onesome for my horse, a mare named Benny V She was a colt when I last saw her in Kerrville, the fifth genera tion of a line owned by my father ever since his marriage The first animal he owned was Benny V's great, great, great-grandmother I couldn t have her with me in Shreve-port, but here in Sarasota we had all the space in creation It was a heaven for horses There was no reason why Ben ny V and I couldn t be together

She arrived one Saturday morning She looked wonder ful. I spent all that morning scrubbing and grooming her and then left her in the lower corral with orders that she be turned loose in the pasture for several hours a day My plan was to leave her here while I was on the road, hoping she would be in good shape for breeding the following year I didn t breed her now because I wanted to be around when she foaled It looked very much as though I were soon to be raising a family and it was a pretty happy feel ing Horses can do that to a man

On one of my daily inspections of the horses my at tention was taken by a big black stallion named Lindy who had a swelling just above his stifle. He was one of the best saddle horses I have ever known His lameness both ered me a great deal

Lindy didn t seem to limp very much and the groom d told me he thought the infection was draining But for ne reason I didn t like the look of it It had hung on far o long

For two or three days, I tried d...
rel ow or oth...

very hard to examine because, althought Lindy was a gentle horse normally and never caused any trouble, the minute I went near his bad leg he would strike out in all directions with what seemed like all four feet at once

On this day, as on most others, I had more things to do than there was time for I was always being forced to put off a lot of routine work for some emergency By the afternoon, everything seemed to be under control and there was nothing pressing for attention, so I gave Lindy a local anesthetic much against his will and opened up the infection I took out a piece of stick about two-and-a half inches long and about three quarters of an inch in diameter It had apparently run up at an angle in his leg above the knee No one saw it happen and there had been only the smallest wound I don't know how long it had been there, but it was easy to see why the infection hadn't cleared

About a week later, I was a little puzzled to find that this same infection was still draining It was just as though nothing had been done to it This time I was seriously worried, so I immediately went for my equipment I got three of the better grooms to help me, we laid the horse down and I injected a shot of anesthetic that put him completely to sleep I had decided to open the leg I went into the wound the way I had before, but this time I continued cutting This time, I found that the area continued clear on through to the other side of the leg Before I finished, I pulled out another piece of stick some six inches long Apparently Lindy had rubbed against something or had fallen, this splinter went almost directly upward in one side of the leg and almost out the other side

After this, I kept his leg packed for a few days and it healed beautifully There was not the slightest suggestion of a limp and this pleased me, because for a performing horse it isn't enough to make him well From an economic standpoint, you must make him well enough to perform,

t wouldn't pay to have a horse on which thousands of lollars have been spent for training and be able to use um only for hauling a float He must go back into his act. Some of the things that happen to our horses in the rocess of the amazing tricks they do are rather spectacular; ome of the treatments and cures are equally so But hether the treatment is spectacular or not, the horses, be- use of their great number and their great value, are a ntinual source of trouble.

The way my new routine was working out, I was spend ng about half my time with the horses Coming out to winter quarters early, I would first make my rounds of the horse corral Then I would examine any animal that I knew was sick or injured or any animal that had required working on in the last day or two

Then I would go through the menagerie, the elephant kraal, the outdoor menagerie cages the monkey house, the lower corral, and end up with the cat barn

Also I was called continually all day and frequently at night to examine animals that weren t acting right Most of the time these didn t require much actual attention the age boys the trainers helpers, and the grooms all had trict orders to call me if they had the slightest suspicion hat an animal was off-color, and they did their work well, ut that meant they called me many times when an animal ad some slight discomfort that didn t require treating— omething that possibly could simply be slept off It was etter that way but it was hectic and time-consuming

Furthermore, I was still spending a lot of time talking to eople talking to the cage boys, talking to the performers was trying to learn as much about the circus as such as I ossibly could, so that I wouldn t be bothered with the ttle matters of timing and routine when we went on the ad and, therefore, could devote all my energy to the mals

My hospital was coming along fine The management ordered anything I wanted in the way of medicine and equipment I had had new shelves put in, and now took pride in my small and unpretentious but efficient little setup

So much of my time was spent with the horses because it was a sure bet that once they started traveling there would be illnesses, accidents, fights and other mishaps I wanted to become so well acquainted with each individual horse that there would be no chance of anything progressing when I could nip it in the bud I had to operate on the theory of the old time family physician who perhaps knew more about his patients than he did about medicine rather than the newer type of doctor who knows more about medicine than he does about his patients

One morning, shortly after a very early breakfast, Jerry a beautiful, big white bareback horse, was brought into the indoor training ring for rehearsal Jerry was the Number One horse in a horse-to-horse trick The two horses cantered around the ring, one immediately behind the other While they ran, an acrobat standing on Jerry's back, would jump into the air do a backward somersault and land on the back of the Number Two horse This was a rather spectacular act and a very difficult one to do Jerry was a good horse and he had been doing this routine for a number of years

[illegible] was a loud commotion
ır [illegible] past the door Tiny, a
tl [illegible] me running out calling
[illegible]

I ran in to find Jerry down on the ground He had stepped on the ring curb and broken his leg All bareback horses are trained to follow the ring curb around I have seldom known one to step on it One quick look at him and I found that the break was right above the hoof

Leaving him where he was I ran for my emergency kit,

hen several assistants and I went to work on him to set the one Down where the break was, there was very little flesh nd I could set it by touch I prepared some plaster of ans and made a cast. We walked Jerry back on three legs his stall, where he immediately lay down

Jerry was a wonderful patient and that is what saved his e For the next eight weeks he spent twenty three-and alf hours of every twenty four lying down in his stall He even ate lying down When he did stand up, he did it very refully and he held the injured leg off the ground When he did lie down he did it as carefully as though he were settling down on a bed of eggs. The bottom of the band aged leg never even got dirty!

He came through it all beautifully We cut down on his feed so his lying around wouldn't make him fat and slug gish or colicky, or give him any of the diseases that horses get from eating too much and not exercising enough Within six months, Jerry was perfectly healthy and walked without a limp He was never good for bareback work gain, though, because he had turned ring-shy He was always afraid he was going to hit that ring curb, and he was unsure enough of himself to be unreliable in the ring But we did use him for a number of other purposes for a long time after that, and he was always a good horse.

Jerry was replaced in the act by Tom, who had been similarly trained but even before we got on the road, Tom proved unsatisfactory During rehearsal one day he lit out with both hind feet for no apparent reason and kicked the head of the Number Two horse There wasn't much I could do about the injured horse except to ease his pain a ttle and take care of the flesh wound His head healed with a very obvious dent in it For show purposes, we managed to cover it up with a tassel or flower, but that horse became ring-shy in another way He would no longer n behind any other horse So we trained him as the

Number One horse to replace Tom, and a new Numb
Two horse had to be broken in to work with him.

Frequently, when a horse is sick he gets what is know
as azoturia. In the old days, we used to call that "Monda
morning sickness." It comes of a horse lying around all d
Sunday, eating as much as he does when working. Starte
to work on Mon

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forced to move; he stands a good chance of rupturing
muscle or some internal organ.

When azoturia does come on, although we make eve
attempt to keep it down by cutting the feed when th
animals aren't working, I always give them an injection
something to relax them, and then a calcium glucona
injection to restore their strength. They are usually a
right within a couple of h

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pu
ting his entire leg in a metal splint. The splint, which D
Young built out of aluminum, was so made that it fitt
him up around his hip and extended down a couple
inches below his hoof We bored a hole through his ho
and bolted that to the splint It was like a permane
crutch, and that Shetland could actually walk while th
break was healing because his weight was on his boo
rather than on his leg. That is now a common treatmen
for fractures for a number of four legged animals. Not
long ago, these same animals would have been shot.

I was learning new things even about horses during thes
first four months in winter quarters. Things were happen
ing so fast, I often didn't dare wait until somebody calle

[illegible] at one a once. My seven

[illegible]

ril, which was opening day in New York, rehearsals were
creasing in frequency and intensity and there was an
creasing number of the little accidents that always hap-
n when animals get together

What I learned about horses was the result of having so
any horses doing so many different things in one place, at
e time. I developed routine treatments for every fore-
eable contingency because only with a well worked-out
outine would it be possible to handle all of the animals
n the road

Take the routine of anesthetizing a horse, for example I
ever give him Nembutal because it makes horses toss
round a good deal while they are coming out of it It is
erribly dangerous for a horse to thrash around He can
urt himself too easily A chloral hydrate anesthesia is
uch preferable I don't always anesthetize completely,
ut even a small amount of chloral hydrate takes the fight
out of them and removes practically all the pain While
doing a thorough internal operation, I simply use a large
dose of chloral hydrate

During this period it was necessary to castrate a number
of horses I have never liked to castrate horses without
good reason but there are times when a male is mean
and too hard to handle unless he is castrated Our experi-
ence has been that geldings, or castrated males, make by
far the best performers in the ring Studs, although some-
times good are likely to be too excitable and unreliable
They are the biters and kickers Mares are good except
when they are in heat then they, too become extremely
wild and are likely to bite and kick. But a well-trained geld-
ing, in the long run is the best performing horse. Whether

Number One horse to replace Tom, and a new Number Two horse had to be broken in to work with him

Frequently, when a horse is sick he gets what is known as azoturia In the old days, we used to call that "Monday morning sickness" It comes of a horse lying around all day Sunday, eating as much as he does when working Starting [illegible]

bling The danger comes if he tries too hard or if he is forced to move, he stands a good chance of rupturing a muscle or some internal organ.

When azoturia does come on, although we make every attempt to keep it down by cutting the feed when the animals aren't working, I always give them an injection of something to relax them, and then a calcium gluconate injection to restore their strength. They are usually all right within a couple of hours

I haven't had many bone breaks, luckily. Although most of them can now be treated, the constant traveling makes for complications

There was a white Shetland I treated in Shreveport This pony broke his leg rather high up, which required putting his entire leg in a metal splint The splint, which Dr. Young built out of aluminum, was so made that it fitted him up around his hip and extended down a couple of inches below his hoof We bored a hole through his hoof and bolted that to the splint It was like a permanent crutch, and that Shetland could actually walk while the break was healing because his weight was on his body rather than on his leg That is now a common treatment for fractures for a number of four legged animals Not so long ago these same animals would have been shot

ne. Awaiting a crisis was only inviting a crisis. My seven hundred animals all needed attention every day. Out of seven hundred animals, just in the ordinary course of events, it wasn't hard to figure the incidence of sickness and accidents. As we drew closer and closer to the first of April, which was opening day in New York, rehearsals were [illegible] in frequency and intensity and there was an increasing number of the little accidents that always happen when animals get together.

What I learned about horses was the result of having so [illegible] horses doing so many different things in one place, at one time. I developed routine treatments for every fore-[illegible] [illegible]ngency because only with a well worked-out routine would it be possible to handle all of the animals on the road.

Take the routine of anesthetizing a horse, for example. I never give him Nembutal because it makes horses toss around a good deal while they are coming out of it. It is terribly dangerous for a horse to thrash around. He can hurt himself too easily. A chloral hydrate anesthesia is much preferable. I don't always anesthetize completely, but even a small amount of chloral hydrate takes the fight out of them and removes practically all the pain. While doing a thorough internal operation, I simply use a large dose of chloral hydrate.

During this period it was necessary to castrate a number of horses. I have never liked to castrate horses without good reason but there are times when a male is mean and too hard to handle unless he is castrated. Our experience has been that geldings, or castrated males, make by far the best performers in the ring. Studs, although sometimes good, are likely to be too excitable and unreliable. They are the biters and kickers. Mares are good except when they are in heat; then they, too, become extremely [illegible] and are likely to bite and kick. But a well trained gelding, in the long run, is the best performing horse. Whether

the circus learned this from the Western cowboys I don't know But I do know that cowboys will almost never ride a mare, although for different reasons They almost always, to my knowledge, ride geldings

Arthur Konyot, who was training the Liberty Act, came over to see me one day and complained of a horse, a very bright horse and a very good performer, but a very mean animal I examined him and found something that one finds only occasionally in horses he had only one testicle It was up in his abdomen and had never dropped It had to be brought down by means of what is known as a ridgeling operation

I anesthetized him completely, tied him up, and cut a hole in the region of the groin I got my hand in through the hole and poked around inside until I found the testicle and, with an instrument, removed it

This horse was all right within a very few weeks and every trace of stubbornness left him I made the groom walk him three or four miles a day while he was recovering for I have found that this continued forced exercising of a horse while he is recovering from an operation is probably the best post-operative treatment you can give him (From my reading lately, I gather that medical doctors are finding that very much the same thing holds true for human patients)

There are also some of our horses whom one might call neurotic There is never a year that I don't have one or two that are veritable babies about the slightest illness The smallest touch of colic will make them thrash around and kick and roll in their stalls unless somebody gives them a little attention Then they will calm down and happily take their medicine But the minute they are left alone, they start thrashing around again

This thrashing around is so dangerous, especially if a horse is colicky that I used to do almost anything to avoid

it. And then one day, I found a treatment that has worked beautifully ever since. The medicine I give horses for colic is a very sharp burning mixture It is usually fed to them in a capsule so that they don t taste it One day, while treating one of these hypochondriacs I took a little of this medicine out of the capsule, put it in a dose syringe, and dropped it in his mouth He tossed his head He poked his tongue out trying to get rid of it but he couldn t It burned him and he didn t like it That gave him something to think about By the time he had forgotten about that, he had also forgotten about his illness He slept quietly for the rest of the day

Some of our gentlest horses are among our worst patients We have a little bay hackney named Sally a beautiful horse. She usually never causes any trouble and never fights with the other horses But the minute anyone tries to give her any kind of medicine in the mouth she rears up and paws with her front feet She could easily kill a careless attendant

Our horses are temperamental because they perform They are always keyed up tense, and very nervous when they are being saddled to go into the act and they are always very calm right after it This is partly due to their training, and partly because trainers have found that high strung and high spirited horses make much better performers than full listless too gentle horses

There a e horses that can t bear to be separated from their mates This is a characteristic that many people, particularly those with little experience, attribute only to monkeys My experience with monkeys has been otherwise This characteristic in fact isn t particularly true of any other animal, but I know there are horse couples that can t stand being separated

That first year we had two American saddle horses that didn t get on well together They used to fight all the time Nevertheless if one was taken out and saddled obviously

to go to work, it didn't affect the other But if it was ta out for any other reason, such as to go to the blacksn shop or for some other unaccustomed purpose the ot would neigh and whinny and break out into a sweat a thrash around until it, too, had to be taken away

After watching this for a while, I gave orders that wh ever one horse had to be taken anywhere, they both shou go together After that, we had no more trouble

We had two beautiful white Liberty horses, Ackm and Alle They were mates, but we noticed no particu attachment, though we knew that they never fought ai had been stablemates for a long time One night, Ackm died of a twisted intestine Alle carried on in a way th I have never seen any other animal do She whinnied co tinually She refused to eat and she refused to sleep W doctored her, we tried her with new mates, we tried change of scene, we tempted her with every possible food we did everything in the way of medication and psycholog o increase her appetite but she simply wasted away With n two months she died of what can only be described as a roken heart

There are pests too, of course We are seldom troubled ith the dreaded botfly—which, throughout the South and outhwest, is the bane of a farmer s existence It lays its gs on the short hair around the horse s knee and under e chin The horse is annoyed by the itching and licks the gs off The larvae, in turn hatch in his stomach and at h themselves to the stomach wall To avoid this we tch for evidence of botfly eggs on horses' legs, and sim mop them off with kerosene The circus has one groom every three horses, which gives a chance for the kind care that almost no farmer can afford

Every time a new horse arrives, he is wormed immedi y I don't worm our horses every year because it hasn't

n necessary But I do see that every horse is wormed at once in three years

Strongylus equinus—a little roundworm that sucks an mal's blood—worries farmers, and we watch carefully signs of it to treat

We also have a number of cases of quarter-crack among r horses This means the hoof starts to crack up top, at e fleshy part. A wound develops there, an infection sets , and the hoof crack would, if it weren't stopped, con nue all the way down the hoof till the horse was perma ntly lame. We watch for this because it is common and soon as we see any sign, we take the horse over to our acksmith shop and have his shoes specially made to stop e ailment and allow healing

Sometimes a horse has to be put away Sometimes he is ld and sick. Sometimes he is badly wounded Sometimes e has an incurable break or an incurable disease When hings like this happen, we don't worry about the techni alities We destroy the animal, and we know, and every ody else knows, that this is a "mercy killing," that there

of horses, I usually inject the animal with strychnine. There is no feeling until the strychnine hits the heart, then the animal dies instantaneously We bury him in a big field we keep as our animal cemetery at the far end of our winter quarters

There is an ailment among horses called founder or lami

the foot My usual experience has been that founder either responds to treatment immediately, or it can't be treated successfully at all and the horse is in so ... oved In this disease, the sole

of the foot drops down below the wall of the hoof a causes excruciating pain

I had two cases of founder during my first weeks wi the show One was a bareback horse The cure was so co plete and so rapid that he was back in the act within week The other was a high school horse A high scho

[illegible] om tl

lancir

knee

bowing, waving a flag, or walking up and shaking han with the band leader There is, of course, perfect directio from the rider Horses like this take two to three years continual expert training in order to be good performe

The trainers, themselves, usually take a lifetime of trai ing In almost every case I can think of, they have com from families of high school riders and high school trai ers Probably the most famous example in recent yea is the great Konyot who was with the circus when I joine it and remained for several years after that It was on of his horses that came down with founder, and it seeme impossible that any cure could be complete enough t allow him to go back into the act Because such horse have to maneuver almost the way a human being does they have to be able to do things that one has no righ to expect even a well horse to do.

However, I would try

I injected about a pint of normal saline solution into this horse's vein every three or four days I also gave him normal horse serum every day, dosed him with alum nitrate every four hours and kept his front feet wrapped in cold compresses As soon as he showed improvement I stopped the alum nitrate but continued the other treatment In a few weeks he was back in the act without a trace of limp

When we were ready to go on tour, it was a safe bet that these horse troubles were just beginning, but this phase

...me work worried me the least. There is always a great deal of satisfaction to be earned by caring for horses, and in my case they helped develop the self-confidence I used for work in other animal departments. To put a new twist on a famous remark: I like horses. I am glad I like them. Because if I didn't like them, I wouldn't be around them, and I like being around them.

CHAPTER VI Training the Big Cats

TRAINING WILD ANIMALS has nothing at all to do with my work or with veterinary medicine in general and I have no de... me to become a trainer. I have never trained a wild anima... to perform, although I have raised two of them. Howeve... I did develop a very real interest in this profession, or ar... during my first weeks with the circus, because of the tr... mendous difficulties of the job and because of my frien... ship with the trainers who worked with the show.

I learned a good deal about the big cats from Alfr... Court and even more from Damoo Dhotre. Damo... whose approach to animal training is unusual. Having... very curious as well as a very alert mind, he has stud... the animals both as species and as individuals. Dam... taught me most of what I know about training cats.

A trainer's job takes a combination of physical agilit mental alertness, and courage It is naturally dangerou The trainers who live long are those who remember th a wild animal is never, never tamed, but only train Damoo has told me time and time again that whenev a trainer gets hurt, it is always the trainer's fault—and th is not the boasting of a smug man who has happened t be lucky Damoo has been badly hurt and he has been i danger of death What he means is that it is bad to be come overconfident, to forget that the animals are stil wild, still savage, and always on the borderline of gettin completely out of control

Damoo's theory on training a wild animal is similar h says, to that of training a child "The first step," he say "is to remove the animal s fear An animal is instinctivel afraid of a stranger, and because he is afraid, he wil attack"

Damoo spends countless hours in front of a cage con

he cage He talks to

with his voice He

n the tip of a long

pole Eventually, sometimes after weeks, the animal stops flying into a panic when Damoo approaches

When he has an animal at that point, he takes him into the training cage, making sure that there are ropes around the animal and that those ropes are held taut by boys outside the cage Then he plays with him, meanwhile doing everything possible to inspire the animal s confidence he assures the animal that he is not going to be hurt, he talks to him, he feeds him, and eventually he returns him to his cage

When the animal has become thoroughly friendly Damoo starts teaching him simple tricks With the aid of the boys holding the ropes, Damoo gives him the signal for his sitting on the pedestal He shows him what is expected of him and rewards him with a piece of meat

en he obeys After several sessions with the guide rope
d the meat, the animal begins to recognize Damoo's
gnal and, every time he hears it, he goes toward the

This is, perhaps, an oversimplification of the wild animal

other he will push or prod him and let him know where
he wants him to go

whip
opular
belief, seldom are animals beaten by a trainer. It stands
to reason, if a trainer wants an animal to lose his fear, he
is hardly likely to beat him up every time he comes in

child is beaten into submission at every point, he will ... no respect but he will have fear and a grudge. He ... wait for the chance to turn on his parents and if he ... turn on them, he will turn on someone else. He, too, ... headed for gangsterdom. In animals, too," he says, "there must be both fear and respect. He is punished only for doing wrong and he must know *why* he is being punished each time. He must be rewarded for being good and he ...

instant."

Damoo himself, though he has been attacked again and again, only severely hits an animal when there is a real *fight and real danger, when the choice is between hitting* the animal and being hurt.

Damoo goes into the cage with five spotted leopards, two pumas, two black jaguars, and two black panthers. One of the panthers still attacks him at the slightest provocation. I have seen Damoo time and again avoid the animal's claw by less than an inch.

I watched Damoo train Negus—the 170-pound black jaguar who once almost killed him—to be carried around ...

trick, climbing up to the top of a pyramid with ... animals. By roping him and feeding him, Damoo finally got him to the point where he would stand on the two stools, his forelegs on one and his hind legs on the other. When the jaguar did this Damoo would reward him with a piece of meat held out on the pointed end of a stick. After several days of feeding him in this manner, the trainer would pat him on the back to get him used to his touch. Then he went one step further: he put his arm

round Negus' back and exerted pressure on his belly with the palm of his hand. This was to get Negus used to that pressure he would feel when Damoo put his neck under Negus' belly to lift him.

During the first few days of this, Negus was frightened. He would lash out at Damoo and then run for his own pedestal. But by slow and patient work, Damoo got to the point where he could get one arm under the animal's belly and lift him two or three inches off the stools. By the end of the month Negus would lie quietly, draped around Damoo's neck.

It is not my purpose to make heroes of these trainers by painting up the melodrama which is inherent in their profession, but too often in the public mind the amount of patience and study and understanding that goes into training wild animals is underestimated. Another common belief is that the animals have an organ removed, certain teeth pulled, or other mysterious operations performed to make them gentle. This is utter nonsense. Other people think that the animals behave because the trainer whips the tar out of them. If the people who make these accusations would stop to think for one moment, they would realize that if the whip were used to slash the animal, his fur and skin would hardly be as smooth and unblemished as it invariably is. Every crack of the whip is a cue in the act for some unaccustomed move, and a trainer can be in serious trouble from the feeling of insecurity this might bring to the animals.

Some years ago Damoo trained a black panther to attack as part of the act. At a certain signal the animal would leap at Damoo and, as Damoo would step backward from the panther would leap and slash out at him with her claws. Time and again, I have seen the panther snatch the [illegible] from around Damoo's neck, so close to him did the claws come. Menaka (pronounced "Men-vak-a") the panther was a very quick animal. Yet Damoo could be

successful with this kind of trick because he himself is even quicker and has perfect physical control He somehow always managed to keep an inch or two from Menaka's reach

When Damoo went into the army, another trainer took over the act The new trainer was a very competent, highly intelligent woman The first time she preformed this trick with the panther everything went well until the point at which she wanted the animal to stop leaping and go back to her pedestal Damoo had accomplished this by stopping in his tracks and thrusting his head out at Menaka The woman trainer was not entirely familiar with Menaka and wasn t quite sure of her Instead of stopping absolutely still probably afraid that the animal might try another leap, she took still another step back But this was exactly the wrong thing to do Menaka knew this as the cue to jump and she mauled her badly

In a mixed group all the natural jungle enemies are expected not only to sit quietly as neighbors, but actually come in close contact with each other during many of the tricks A mixed group trainer has to be good but even he is sometimes attacked so complete absence of fear on the part of these trainers is something that never fails to amaze me

For myself I can t claim to be thoroughly unconcerned when working on a wild animal On the occasions when it was necessary to work on an animal that was not restrained and not unconscious I have had a strange feeling in the pit of my stomach and the symptoms of what might be water on the knee But the trainers dare not be afraid In rare cases when the trainer has had reason to become so he usually has found it expedient to change his profession

Damoo is thoroughly aware of all the dangers but at the same time he has the kind of confidence in himself that makes him feel master of whatever emergency arises A

Court had the same confidence. He lived to retire. trainers who have been in the business for many expect to reach a ripe old age. Many are sure that, if don't, it will be because of a little bug rather than a animal.

moo has a beautiful spotted leopard named Sonya

asked Damoo once whether, despite the fact that he

vous or excited, and he knows that he cannot trust

"How, then," I asked him, "do you protect yourself en you do this trick?

"If you will watch me carefully," said Damoo, "you will that some days, on the days when Sonya is upset, I

If that makes your blood run cold or bring duck bumps your skin you were not born to be an animal trainer hat is the stuff of which successful cat trainers are made don't believe what they have can be developed. We are how that way, or we are not.

Cat training is such a fascinating art I never miss a chance to watch one of the trainers working his animals,

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Damoo is thoroughly aware of all the dangers but at the same time he has the kind of confidence *in himself* that makes him feel master of whatever emergency arises A

whether it is running through an old act or breaking th for new tricks Since some of the best trainers in the w have worked and do work with the show, I have ha chance to study them all at close range

There are two kinds of animal men There is a wo of difference between them, although the public usu is unaware of any distinction The first group are the r trainers They take raw animals out of the jungle, br them, teach them tricks, and perform with them Th are the men like Court, Dhotre, Proske, Clemens, Mathi and a few others Then there are the men who perfo with animals already broken and trained They simply peat a given set of signals in order to make the anim perform One of the most famous of all American "trai ers" belonged to this group He even went so far as employ a man to train his animals for him The Hage beck Zoo in Germany has for many years trained entire ac and then sold them to "trainers" who were actually me performers

It is an interesting fact that most cat trainers prefer t work with jungle raised animals rather than with bottle-fe animals The reason they give is that pet bottle fed animal are pampered when they are babies and are seldom pun ished By the time they get big enough to be dangerous, i is too late to start punishing them They are so completel unafraid that even hitting them lightly, which is enougl to bring a young wild animal under control, will onl make them savage and bring on an attack Trainers fee if they, themselves, raised an animal on a bottle, they would be sure to start disciplining it early so the animal would respect them and would respect their orders at a later date But if the animal had been raised as is a pet, by the time it was six or eight months old it would be much more dangerous than a jungle raised animal, be- cause it would have no fear and would only become bitter if then punished for the first time

There are many legends current about the experiences of animal trainers. One popular story which has been at ...uted to any number of trainers is about the man who ... once attacked by one of his animals, one of the other ...mals then saving his life I have asked a number of ...ners about this unlikely story and have found none of

...e act. Before he got around to replacing him, the lion ...e night struck out at Damoo, ripped his arm badly, and, Damoo stepped back, lunged at him He knocked ...amoo down, and then, Damoo says, another of his lions ...hich happened to be directly behind him leaped over ...s fallen body and landed on the attacking lion The ...o lions started fighting This gave Damoo a chance to ...ing both animals under control However, he says ...ere is no evidence that the

... to the detriment of the trainer, where the other ...nimals became excited by the attacking one and all at...tacked the trainer When this happens, the show has only ...ne choice and that is to find a replacement for the ...trainer at the ...

The cat trainers no doubt get a certain satisfaction out of their difficult achievement But as for me—the ...training ring is a nice place to visit but I d hate to make a ...

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experience of this kind in school was not ... increase my enth... gre... hy... ph... elephants, and bears ... seem to come up with lions,

Back in my circus initiation period, we had an old lion named Samba. He was past his performing days and was living out his years in the menagerie. Never having done any dentistry on a wild animal, I somehow had the confident feeling that perhaps, if I lived a very good life, I would never have to. But Samba didn't know about my confidence and he wasn't a judge of how lives were lived. He was just an old lion having a lot of trouble eating.

The keeper called me over one day, to ask me to watch the way this lion fed. Samba would tear off a piece of meat savagely, and then chew, and chew, and chew. He seemed never to finish one bite of meat. I watched him for a while and then realized that apparently the meat was sticking back in his molars. It couldn't possibly stick there unless those teeth were in very bad shape. There was only one thing to do: check those teeth.

We ran Samba into a squeeze cage and gave him a small injection of Nembutal. (For a short operation like this, there was no point in keeping him asleep for eight or ten or twelve hours.) I gave him just enough Nembutal until he went down and his jaws were relaxed. For the next couple of hours he could do me no harm. This was all the time I needed to fix him up.

The menagerie superintendent helped me put him on the operating table to examine him. Two of his lower molars were very badly rotted. They were broken and so decayed they had almost caverns in them. Extracting a lion's tooth isn't too much different from extracting a human tooth. The gum is broken away from the tooth, the tooth is loosened, then extracted. The only difficulty

CHAPTER VII This Won't Hurt Much

MY PASSIONATE DISLIKE of dentistry started in veterinar school One day an old Negro farmer brought a horse ov to us and offered him for sale for one dollar Some of th horses that these poor farmers bring in at the end of th season are old, some are very old It had been many year since this horse had been very old Only once since the have I seen anything so decrepit and that was a horse tha a farmer in Ohio tried to sell me as the circus was passing through

Old as this horse was the school bought him and the students embarked on a campaign to return him to health if not to youth I volunteered to take over at his dentistry because extraction is very easy in an old horse and I though I would be getting away with something I was

He had two bad teeth in the back of his mouth I re moved my shirt and went to work with real enthusiasm certain that I remembered all my lessons in dentistry This was an easy job The boys who were assigned to the rest of his anatomy were really going to have tough going

Though I established some kind of school record for ex tracting two teeth in a minimum length of time, for the rest of my years in vet school, it was impossible to live down the fact that one of the teeth I pulled happened to be the wrong one

Like most kids, I hated going to the dentist—maybe more than most kids, because I had to go more often than most A dislike for dentists to [illegible]

h enamel, such as ours As a result, tooth decay
t nonexistent in horses
s do have other tooth troubles Blind tooth is not
ion This is a case of two alternate teeth growing
together that the middle tooth has no room to
own When it doesn't it simply grows backwards
ot pushes its way upward until it causes serious

standard method for treating blind tooth is not

nd bit, until you reach the root of the offending
Then, with a little dental punch, you simply knock
oth back into the mouth, and then pack the wound
as always been interesting to me to note an animal's
n to pain Take the horse—this wound I have de-

it is nearly healed, I change the packing and irrigate
ou would expect that the tissues would be sensitive,
t to some extent. Yet I can't recall a single case of
e seeming to mind in the least this daily changing
ing, and even probing to determine the condition of
ound.
tracting a horse's tooth becomes easier as the horse
s older As a horse ages, his teeth become longer, and
ey do, the root becomes shorter Horses frequently
loose teeth These are extremely easy to extract They
sionally split their teeth, but this, too, causes no
ble except to the horse

is that the root of a lion's tooth extends into the gum for about an inch and a half and it is ticklish to make sure the entire tooth comes out without breaking off and leaving a splinter of root to cause future infection ... care This was ... it to be right. ... look at his

Once Samba awoke, I wouldn't ... mouth to check its condition each day While working, I explained each step to the menagerie superintendent who, it seemed, had never witnessed any but the most routine work on any of his animals and was fascinated by this procedure He asked questions continuously and I found that my answers helped clarify my own thinking, as well ... his We took the teeth out and packed the gums ... few minutes we changed the packing Meanwhile, it was a good chance to study the rest of Samba's mouth ... this was all pretty new to me, too

We both must have lost track of the time That is the only way I can explain it For, while I was pointing out something in the lion's mouth, his jaws, which had ... hanging loose under the anesthetic, suddenly snapped ... lightly We both reacted instant... we slid him back ... ater, Samba was ... also dripping wet

When Samba woke up, he was on a cheap drunk which is the normal result of taking Nembutal as an anesthetic We put him back into his cage, and after stagg... around for a while he lay down and went into a ... sleep When he awoke he was not only eating normall... but was much healthier and active than he had been ... months

Considering the trouble they give otherwise, horses a... not too prone to tooth trouble Their teeth almost nev... decay I have a rather obvious theory that it is because horse's tooth is a very solid bone formation, not ...

-pping as when a doctor, in all innocence, gently touches ca-.

Elephants' tusks cause continual trouble. We have found -sable to saw off tusks, because elephants do fight; -d when an elephant fights, she would be quite capable -pping an opponent to shreds with those sharp tusks -t even though the tusk has been cut off, frequently an -phant will break what remains. The problem then is to -ly a local anesthesia, then pick out as many fragments -the tusk as can be found in order to prevent infection

[illegible]

-y will indicate the average length of the root of the -sk is about fifteen inches The wall of the tusk at the -y end is nearly as thin as an eggshell

We had a Russian bear in an act. One day the trainer -d his wife stopped me on the path to the hospital to ask -e to take a look at the bear He was eating poorly, they -d me, and there were signs of wildness in what was -therwise a very gentle animal (The "gentle' was theirs, -t mine Gentleness is something bears are not noted for -telligence, maybe But not kindness)

We walked into the cage The trainer and his wife -lked right in purposefully, and I couldn't do anything -t follow without making an issue of it The trainer -d the bear's head and his wife held the animal's mouth -pen. Then they looked at me and both assured me I -uld work unmolested and safely

It was almost like a clown routine I was more than a -ttle doubtful. Although I [illegible]

watch how he eats and also how he digests his food If both functions are normal, the chances are that the horses teeth are all right

Once a year, I examine all the horses for rough teeth ... is that their upper molars ... utside and their lower molars on the inside These jagged points are painful as the horse chews his food. The treatment here is very simple I simply prop his mouth open with an instrument made for the purpose and "float" his teeth The float is an instrument which looks like a wood rasp, the operation is simply a matter of filing the teeth down until their points are dull

I have seen dogs with beautiful inlays and very carefully designed fillings My own hunch is that this is done largely for show, or perhaps for practice Never in my experience has it been necessary to fill a dog's tooth His teeth are either healthy or they are split or broken and have to be extracted

Although elephants have teeth, they seldom caus trouble An elephant has enormous molars Each tooth i as big as the palm of a man's hand I had to pull one once but the tooth was very loose Since my knees were precisel in the same condition, it was lucky that some carefu tugging with a long handled pair of extractors lifted th tooth effortlessly I should not relish the job of pulling tight molar, but thanks to elephant ingenuity and intelli gence, I very likely may be spared an elephant, when sh is troubled by a tooth, will pull it herself I have watche the operation and it is amazing She puts her head dow until she can grasp her foot chain in her mouth Then working the chain back to and under the offending tootl she jerks her head back and knocks the tooth out Some times she has to try several times before the tooth gives but she keeps trying There isn't as much crying and

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ephant will break what remains The problem then is to pply a local anesthesia, then pick out as many fragments f the tusk as can be found in order to prevent infection.

ithin the gum is hollow and the wall gets thinner and hinner as the tusk extends inward This structure is similar o that of a cow's horn My post mortems on several elephants indicate the average length of the root of the tusk is about fifteen inches. The wall of the tusk at the very end is nearly as thin as an eggshell

and there were signs of wildness in what was otherwise a very gentle animal (The "gentle' was theirs, not mine Gentleness